ONCE BOUGHT, ALWAYS BOUGHT.

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 308.] FOR WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 24, 1894. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

ENAMELLED COPPER LETTERS.

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2/6, 3/6, 5/- & 10/6 (SECRETLY PACKED).

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100 YEARS' WORLD-WIDE RECORD OF SUCCESS!

NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS

INDIGESTION BILIOUSNESS HEADACHE
STOMACH & LIVER COMPLAINTS DEBILITY

The BEST of all TONICS and a GENTLE APERIENT.

Mild in Operation, Perfectly Safe, & Free from Injurious Drugs.

SOLD EVERYWHERE IN BOTTLES AT 1/1½, 2/9, AND 11/- EACH.

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A HAIR PIN WITHOUT POINTS HAS GOOD POINTS!!!

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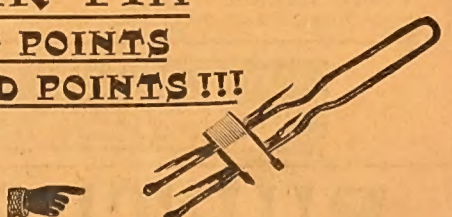

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THEY COST YOU EXACTLY SAME PRICE AS OLD SORT.

EACH STORE AND WAREHOUSE KNOWS ALL ABOUT THEM.

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please mention if a lady's or gentleman's prize is required. The Handkerchiefs are of large sizes, and well worth 2s. 6d. each. Suitable for Ladies' or Gentleman's wear. LIGHT, SOFT, WARM, & DURABLE, as only a Silk Handkerchief can be. I have reduced the price for the Special Sale to 1s. each, or 13 stamps 2 lots for 2s.; 6 for 5s.; 12 for 9s. 6d. Prize with each Handkerchief.

A Live Testimonial, worth a Thousand recommendations from me.

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"Dear Sir,—I am more than satisfied with the handkerchief and lovely present received this morning; seeing that I had it only a few minutes in my hands when I sold it for more than double the price I paid for it. I consider it marvellous how they can be produced at such low prices. Please send me 24 more for myself and friends, for P.O.O. enclosed. Wishing you every success with your sale.—I am, yours faithfully, L. WATTS."

P.O.O.'s payable at Rugby. Letters addressed to

H. BUTCHER, Clifton Mill, Rugby.

PLEASE MENTION THIS PAPER.

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£20 See Illus. Guide. 259 pp 3d. "How to open a Cigar Stores from £20 to £1,000." "TOBACCONISTS' Co.," 186, Euston Road, London. Manager — H. Myers Estab. 1866. *N.B.*—Shopfitters and Show Case Makers for all trades. ESTIMATES FREE.

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"MIZPAH" BROOCH.

The most popular piece of Jewellery in the World. Every purchaser delighted. Each Brooch Hall Marked, and in handsome heart-shaped plush case.

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Engagement Jewellery a Speciality.

Catalogue (618 Illustrations) Post-free.

MASTERS, Jeweller, RYE, SUSSEX.

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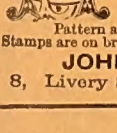

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Pattern and Price Lists post free.

Stamps are on brass mounts with black handles.

JOHN BERKLEY,

8, Livery Street, Birmingham.

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permanently cured. A pamphlet giving sound practical advice, and full particulars of a successful treatment for a rapid, simple, and inexpensive home-cure, forwarded free to all upon receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—Prof. F. W. HOLZ, Argyll Chambers, West Strand, London. (Mention this paper.)

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(Not Vamping)

IN ONE HOUR,

By using the "Piano and Organ Note-Teacher."

INVALUABLE TO ALL LEARNERS.

1s. 2d. Post Free from the Inventor:

L. G. HALL,

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SWEET WEDDING BELLS.

THE MOST FASCINATING PARLOUR GAME.

1/- Patent No. 5482.

Obtainable of all Stationery and Fancy Dealers.

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GRATEFUL COMFORTING.

COCOA

BOILING WATER OR MILK.

MELVILLE'S

New Upright

GRAND PIANOFORTE

26 GUINEAS (*Net Cash Price*).

This Piano is confidently recommended as the very best instrument ever produced at the money. It has all the latest improvements. Price 26 Guineas. Inspection and trial is invited.

MELVILLE,

61, Charing Cross Road, London.

EASY PAYMENTS **ORGANETTES** Wonderful instruments. Anyone can play them. Over 700 tunes ready. **ONLY 4/- MONTHLY**

Particulars free. Draper, Organette Works, Blackburn.

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Knits STOCKINGS ribbed or plain GLOVES and CLOTHING in WOOL, SILK or COTTON. INSTRUCTIONS FREE. Lists free per post. TRIUMPHANT AWARD at PARIS. The only WINNER in the WORLD of 7 GOLD MEDALS and 19 other Honours.

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VACCINE for the MOUTH
Strengthens the Gums
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The only Dentifrice securing
BEAUTIFUL TEETH

POUDRE et PATE DENTIFRICES DE SUEZ

London Agents: WILCOX & Co., 239, Oxford Street.

WE ALL WANT

to have beautiful and luxuriant hair, but it is almost impossible, leading the artificial life we do, unless we use WHITE'S QUICKENER - that will ensure it. Carriage paid 1s. 3d. per bottle. ARTHUR WHITE, 34, GRAY'S INN ROAD, LONDON, W.C.

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ECZEMA

OR A SKIN DISEASE OF ANY KIND,

A single application of "ANTECZEMA" gives relief, and a few more applications effect a cure.

"ANTECZEMA" is sold by Chemists, etc., or will be sent post free for 1s. 3d., 2s. 9d., or 4s. 9d., by

THE ANTECZEMA COMPANY,
83, CASTLE ROAD, LONDON, N.W.

Book on the Skin and Diet free.

HAIR DESTROYED

permanently and absolutely by an entirely new and harmless self-treatment. Total destruction guaranteed. This marvellous remedy has never yet failed. Pamphlet, giving full particulars, sent on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—Prof. F. W. HOLZ, Argyll Chambers, West Strand, London. (Mention this paper.)

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We will give to every applicant for our large new Price List, &c., 30 Genuine Foreign Stamps; all different, including Transvaal, British Guiana, Kustend and Czernawoda, 2 Spain (baby king), Victoria Great Britain (I.R. official), 3 Cape Colony, 3 Canada, 4 Indian, 5 United States (including Columbus issue), the lot sent post free for 2d. Send 3½d. at once for our 12 page Illustrated Stamp Album, containing upwards of 1,000 full size engravings of stamps. Special offer—A Collection of 500 stamps, all different for 5s. 3d.

JNO. GRAVES & CO.,

Stamp Importers, Bury St. Edmunds.

BALDNESS CURED in all its forms. Send stamped addressed envelope for Testimonials, Press Criticism, and valuable Pamphlet, containing Chapters on Baldness, Loss of Hair, Greyness, Superfluous Hair, &c., with Advice Form for Treatment, to Dr. HORN, Hair Specialist, Newport, Isle of Wight.

£2 WEEKLY UPWARDS may be HONESTLY REALISED by persons of EITHER SEX, without hindrance to present occupation.

For Samples (returnable), &c., enclose addressed envelope to EVANS, WATTS & Co. (P 229), Merchants, Birmingham.—*This is genuine.*

HAIR DESTROYED.

A lady who has permanently destroyed Superfluous Hairs on herself, will be happy to forward free, to all similarly afflicted, full particulars of a simple, inexpensive and harmless self-treatment. Send stamped addressed envelope in confidence to Mrs. "T. S.," 87, Strand, London. Mention SHORT STORIES.

A Real Boon to Ladies.

TO Especially to those who wish to know of a safe, certain, and speedy remedy for all irregularities and obstructions, a remedy which, under the most trying circumstances and in the most difficult and OBSTINATE CASES, NEVER FAILS TO AFFORD RELIEF, GENERALLY IN A FEW HOURS. LADIES

No case hopeless, failure is simply impossible, as Mrs. Snow, of Denmark Hill, Camberwell, writes:—

"By adopting your treatment my anxiety and misery was over within twenty-four hours, although I had been daily taking pills and other things in vain. Half the quantity you sent proved effective, to my intense joy and surprise.

A sworn guarantee is enclosed with all testimonials and medicine, which is inexpensive, as one bottle at 4s. 6d. (by post, 4s. 9d.) is usually sufficient for any case.

Full particulars will be gladly forwarded to any lady on receipt of addressed envelope.

Write privately to—

Mrs. P. S. S.,

145, STOCKWELL ROAD, LONDON, S.W.

TOWLE'S PENNYROYAL & STEEL PILLS

FOR FEMALES.

QUICKLY CORRECT ALL IRREGULARITIES, REMOVE ALL OBSTRUCTIONS and RELIEVE the distressing SYMPTOMS so prevalent with the sex. Boxes 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. (the latter size contains three times the quantity), of all Chemists, or will be sent anywhere on receipt of 15 or 34 stamps, by the maker,

E. T. TOWLE, Chemist, NOTTINGHAM.

Beware of Imitations injurious and worthless.

A BOON TO LADIES

Collins' Marvellous Female Remedy.

Mr. COLLINS (who was 30 years a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England), will forward free of Charge, full PARTICULARS of a REMEDY, which during an extensive practice both at home and in the Colonies, he has never known to fail in the most OBSTINATE CASES of OBSTRUCTION and IRREGULARITIES. Send addressed envelope for full particulars, and waste no more time and money on useless Pills and so-called Remedies, &c., which, in the majority of cases, are nothing but PURGATIVES, and cause SICKNESS, PROSTRATION, and PAIN, without having the desired effect.

Letters to be addressed—

D. COLLINS.

GOTHIC HOUSE, 9, ERSKINE STREET, LIVERPOOL.

MADAME FRAIN'S

FAMOUS MIXTURE.

The most powerful and effective on earth.

For the most obstinate cases. Will not injure the most delicate. Price 7s. 6d. (Strongest, 11s per bottle); post free, 6d. extra. HERBAL INSTITUTE 1a, Hackney Road (opposite Shoreditch Church), London, N.E. Send at once stamped directed envelope for particulars and proofs. I will forfeit £100 for every testimonial that is not genuine, and they can be seen at any time.

RUPTURE.

LINK SHELL TRUSS (Patent)

POSITIVELY CURES.—Vide *Lancet.*

PARTICULARS FREE.

LINK SHELL TRUSS CO., 171, WARDOUR ST., LONDON, W.

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All communications respecting Advertisements should be sent to the Advertisement Department, 2, RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.

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SHORT STORIES.

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON.

No. 308.] *FOR THE WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 24, 1894.* [PRICE ONE PENNY.

A PERSONAL AND WHAT CAME OF IT

YOU may smile if you like, but I always read my morning paper from "a" to "z." I begin with the top of the first column on the first page, and finish with the end of the column on the last page. In that way I lose no possible scrap of information, and, besides, the habit often leads to important consequences, as the following narrative will show.

For a whole week I had found in the column of my paper devoted to "Personals" the following touching appeal:—

MY THEODORE,—Why have you not answered my last two letters? Are you angry with me, or are you ill? Oh, my Theodore, have pity on me, and relieve the anxiety of your suffering CLEOPATRA.

The first time I read it it made no particular impression upon me. So with the second and third times—for I remembered that all advertisements are generally inserted three times—but when I opened my paper on the fourth morning, and saw it still there, it set me to thinking seriously. Cleopatra began to interest me. The advertisement had already cost her eight shillings.

The fifth morning came, and with it the same heart-breaking appeal. It began to affect not only my nerves, but to arouse my indignation. Cleopatra had evidently written two letters to this unknown person, who had obstinately refused to answer them. Courtesy alone would have demanded some acknowledgment of them, however formal. He was angry with her, unquestionably, for in the last advertisement was added the line—"Are you still angry with me?"

But even had she done something to make him angry, he might have taken some sort of notice of her appeal. And it was touching, too, the way in which she asked if he were ill.

The next morning I departed from my usual habit; I looked at the "Personal" column first

There it was again.

Unhappy Cleopatra! Had she taken space in the advertisement columns of the paper for a year?

That sort of thing could not go on longer.

My resolution was taken. I sat down to my writing desk at once, hastily scrawled a few lines, inclosed the price of one insertion, and sent it by a boy to the office of the newspaper.

The next morning I tore open the paper. There stood my advertisement in large letters just after that of Cleopatra.

DEAR MR. THEODORE,—Will you not show some pity on Cleopatra, and not leave her to suffer longer? Your conduct is both unbecoming and reprehensible. MICHAEL.

Now we shall see, I thought, if he will keep silence.

There was no sign from him in the next day's paper, but from her there was this line:

MICHAEL,—Thanks, oh thanks, you good soul! CLEOPATRA.

It is very flattering to be considered a good man, but there is something about the expression, "good soul," that I don't exactly like. Its application by Cleopatra rather displeased me. An old woman, who is rheumatic and who reads the Bible a great deal, is a "good soul"; but a man of forty, who dresses well and has ambition—well! However, when I came to read it over, I could see that it was not ill-meant. It was unquestionably a genuine outburst of feeling. In any case, it was thoughtful of her to make an acknowledgment of my interest in her affairs.

I could hardly wait until the next morning to come. The moment the paper arrived, I turned to the advertisement page. It was there! Theodore had been aroused to answer. This was the token of his existence:

MICHAEL,—Do not meddle with what does not concern you. It strikes me, from your note, that you are like your namesake, who killed himself in running after the comet. Will you, in the future, be so good as to mind your own business? THEODORE.

On the instant I sat down and wrote the following, which I despatched for the next day's issue:

THEODORE,—Your rudeness does not at all surprise me. I was perfectly prepared for it after the brutal manner in which you have treated the prayers of a lady. The Chinese have a custom of never answering a letter until a month after it is received. I take the liberty of supposing you to be a Chinaman. MICHAEL.

And then the correspondence dropped.

I looked upon the whole affair as dead and buried, when some days later the name Michael caught my eye in the advertising columns. Was it intended for me, or for some other Michael? A second glance assured me. It ran:

MICHAEL is earnestly entreated to send his address to CLEOPATRA.

Hem! That was something to be thought about. Might not it be a trap which was set for me? To judge of him by his advertisement, this Theodore was a surly, cantankerous fellow, who might want to find my address to make a personal attack upon me, or perhaps send me a challenge for a duel.

I am opposed to duelling on principle. I prefer any time a dozen oysters to a shot in the leg or a thrust with a small sword.

What should I do?

The advertisement was certainly signed "Cleopatra," and courtesy demanded some kind of answer. I would not follow the Chinese method and wait a month, so I answered that my address might be obtained from the editor.

A morning or two later, while sitting at breakfast, my old housekeeper informed me that a lady wished to see me.

"Is she young?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Pretty?"

"Yes." My housekeeper was very sure on that point.

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A ravishingly beautiful young lady.

"Clear the table, then, and let her come in." I hurried into my bedroom to brush the hair over the bald place on the top of my head, slipped on a black coat—in which I am assured I look tolerably well—and hurried back again. When I re-entered the room, a ravishingly beautiful young lady, whom I had never before seen, stood before me.

"Sir," she began in a soft voice, in which there was an anxious sound, "forgive this intrusion on the part of a stranger, but——"

Here she made a slight pause. I pushed forward an arm-chair.

"Please be seated. There is not the slightest need of an apology. I am charmed, I'm sure."

Her eyes until this point had been cast down. Now she raised them and looked me full in the face. What eyes! Black, with blonde hair. Is there any combination more magnificent?

"Mr. Michael," she began, "I am not altogether unknown to you."

"No; certainly not," I stammered, "certainly not. I—I believe I have had the pleasure——"

I looked at her closely. I was lying—I had never seen her before.

"You meant to do me a good turn, even if you failed."

To whom had I attempted to do a good turn? I could think of no one. I only bowed.

"Yes, Mr. Michael, you certainly have shown that you are a man with a heart."

She looked at me with trustful eyes. Such eyes! They burned to the very marrow of my soul.

"Why, my dear young lady," I burst forth, "I should be worse than a barbarian if I did not place my heart and myself at your disposal. Yes, I would even, to please you, set sail for Corea, and set the Chinese——"

"Chinese!" she interrupted. "That brings me to the business I came upon. Calling him that was the very thing that made him so angry. He insists that the whole matter was a conspiracy between you and me. He is so dreadfully jealous!"

Conspiracy! He! What and whom could she be talking about? And a Chinese! Could it be possible that this charming young creature had a Chinese lover? Women have all sorts of tastes, however. But then, what had I to do with it? Why should she confide in me? But I put a bold face upon it.

"Jealous! That is too ridiculous! You must convince him that he is mistaken."

"But I cannot. Mr. Michael, you are the only one that can bring him to his senses. You must call on him and explain. Perhaps he will then listen to reason."

Cold chills ran over me at the thought. To put myself into the hands of this Chinese Othello! To risk my head between the jaws of the lion! To explain a matter of which I was thoroughly ignorant to a heathen foreigner mad with jealousy! No. My willingness to become a martyr did not extend so far as that.

"My dear madam," I stammered, "nothing would give me greater pleasure, but my professional duties occupy every moment of my time from morning until night."

"But you cannot refuse me," she pleaded. "You can take time enough for that, dear, good Mr. Michael!"

And she caught my hand and patted it like a child. I could resist no longer. I declared myself ready.

"Thanks! oh, thanks!"

"Where does he live?" I asked firmly. I felt at that moment like one of the old knights who was about to go out to fight dragons.

"In Powderhouse Street, number 17. You can't mistake it. It is on the right-hand side of the street, and the first door to the left as you enter."

Powderhouse Street! The name sounded ominous.

At ten o'clock the next morning I prepared myself for the fight. After a long walk I reached the street. My heart beat so it could be heard when I stepped into the hall of the house where the monster dwelt.

The first door to the left. This was it. At the further end of the passage was a servant with a dustpan and brush.

"Here!" I called to him in a loud voice, "can you tell me if the Chinaman is at home?"

I was just in front of the door, and, as I spoke, it flew violently open and the dragon stood before me. I raised both hands mechanically to keep him from springing at my throat. It was the instinct of self-preservation. Then I looked him in the eye. My hands dropped.

"What, Damian!"

"Michael!"

For five long years I had neither heard from nor seen my old schoolfellow, and here he had dropped upon me, or rather, I had dropped upon him, from the clouds. We shook each other's hands till they ached.

"But what in all the world are you doing here, and where have you been all these years, Damian?"

We shook each other's hands till they ached.

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"That is a long story to tell, Michael. I have been in America."

"In America? Truly? You must tell me all about it. Isn't there a *café* near here where we can have a chat?"

Suddenly I remembered my mission.

"But not just yet," I cried. "I have a disagreeable task to perform first. It was a lucky mistake my going to the wrong door first, for I found you. I was told the first door to the left. I say, old fellow, do you know whether there is a Chinaman living in the building?"

"A Chinaman? Why, what should a Chinaman do here?"

"Well, that's what I really don't know myself. But I have promised to find him, and I expect to have my throat cut for my good nature. I haven't the slightest idea what I have to say to him. It is to oblige a young woman whose name I don't know, and whom I never saw but once."

"Shall I?"

Damian shook his head, and looked at me with a curious glance.

"Terrible to die so young, isn't it?" with a weak attempt to encourage myself by a joke.

My friend paid no attention to what I was saying. He was looking over my shoulder towards the door.

"Are you convinced now?" said a voice behind me. "Do you believe now I have told the truth, Theodore?"

Theodore! And that voice! It was that of my unknown visitor of the day before. Theodore! Where had I heard that name before?

"I have not the slightest idea what you mean," replied my friend coldly. "All I know is that I have just accidentally met an old school comrade."

"That is splendid!" and she clapped her hands joyously. "But why are you staring at me so strangely, Mr. Michael?"

"Because I really don't know what to say. I haven't yet found your Chinaman."

"The Chinaman!" and my unknown laughed heartily. "Why, the Chinaman stands before you—Theodore!"

"Cleopatra!"

Ah, ha! Theodore! Cleopatra! The light began to break in upon me.

"That impudent Michael in the advertisement was you then?" said my friend.

"And you, Damian, were——"

"For goodness sake, don't call me Damian again. I dropped that name in America years ago. I am Theodore now."

"Well, Theodore. I take back the Chinaman, but you must acknowledge your mistake in saying that it was Michael who ran after the comet."

"If it will be of any comfort to you, certainly. It was very likely Timothy."

"Well, in any case, let us forgive and forget. And now for a couple of Rüdesheimer."

The wine was brought, and we sat down to it round the little table in Theodore's room. The whole matter was, little by little, cleared up.

"I am curious to know one thing, Theodore," said I. "Why did you let the charming Cleopatra beg in vain for an answer for a whole week? That wasn't at all like you."

Theodore hesitated.

"You are forcing my hand, Michael, but I will tell you. All this whole week I have been held by the police on the charge of disturbing the peace. You see, I was going home one night after a late supper where I had drunk too much, and that was because of our little quarrel." He here nodded at Cleopatra. "I wasn't in the best humour, and, for the matter of that, neither was the man whom I met on the way home. He insisted on my going along quietly, and I insisted on singing, and the end of it was that he took me to the police-station. For seven long days I sat there, determined not to pay my fine, growling to myself, and thinking of Cleopatra, who is to blame for the whole of it. I might have been sitting there now if a third party had not thrust his nose into the business and made me jealous."

"Then I really have you to thank for his coming back after all, you dear, good Mr. Michael."

And Cleopatra rose from her chair and came to my side of the table.

"Shall I?" she asked, looking at Theodore.

"Certainly," said he, laughing, and a kiss from her soft lips burned on my cheek.

The wedding came off three weeks later, and to keep up the joke that had brought us together I sent them, for a present, an elegant Chinese pagoda for the mantel.

Since that time I have never mixed myself up in newspaper correspondence.

XTRA MAS Number of "P.W."

NOW ON SALE.

LAST year many thousands of readers were unable to obtain a copy of our Extra Christmas Number, and considering that this year's issue contains even more exceptional attractions, we are anticipating a still larger demand.

The number consists almost entirely of stories by the best authors, profusely illustrated throughout by first-class artists. Stories appear from the pens of Messrs. Headon Hill, George Griffith, W. L. Alden, and G. B. Burgin, and amongst the artists illustrating the Number are Miss G. Demain Hammond, Miss Inez Warry, and Messrs. Georges Montbard, Raymond Potter, E. S. Hope, and Sydney Harvey; an array of literary and artistic talent which I make bold to say will not be equalled in any other Christmas number published this year, at even double the price.

P.W. Extra Christmas Number is twice the size of the ordinary issue of *Pearson's Weekly*, is bound in a peacock blue wrapper, and with it is given away a beautiful coloured plate measuring 19¼ inches by 14¼ inches. The price, as last year, is threepence, not a very out-of-the-way sum to have paid, you will say, for the coloured plate alone.

This number is now on Sale. Intending purchasers should not fail to buy their copies at once, as owing to the time necessary for the careful printing of the coloured plate there can be no re-issue.

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THE NOVELIST'S NIECE

A FRENCH STORY.

I WAS young, for I was not much more than twenty; and I was inexperienced, for after having frankly published a novel at my own expense, I sent three copies, in all seriousness, to the Secretary of the Académie Française in the hope of winning the Academy prize, and took no further steps in the matter, confident of my own merit. However, an old aunt whom I had informed of my ambitious object, gave me some good advice.

"My dear nephew," she said, "I know an Academician, the well-known writer Z——. Give me a copy of your book with a special dedication. I will speak to him about it, for I meet him every week at some house or other, when I am dining out."

The very next morning my book was despatched to the famous writer Z——, who is dead now, but not, as you shall see, from having read my book.

Summer was coming on, and I went down into Burgundy to get a breath of country air, and to economise a little. The publication of my book had created a stringency in my finances. Times have changed since authors were the ruin of publishers.

In a compartment of the Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles Express there awaited me the sweetest satisfaction that literature has ever afforded me.

There were three of us in the compartment. Myself, of course; then a man of about sixty, short of figure, red of face, bald, and a strange thing at his age, without the ribbon of the Legion of Honour. On the other hand, the young girl who accompanied him—his daughter, doubtless—seemed to me a person of indisputable distinction, for she wore silk stockings. I have learned since, to my sorrow, that it does not do to pin one's faith to silk stockings.

However, the fair unknown might have worn sabots, had only one eye, and been hunchbacked. It was not on her my dazzled eyes rested, it was on the book she was reading; a book in a salmon-coloured binding that I would have recognised miles away. Great heavens, it was my book!

Everyone can set the press working nowadays. Who among us has not given himself the refined delight of seeing his name blazing forth from a bookseller's window! But to see one's self read! Ah, what a voluptuous delight it is.

My neighbour was not agitated. She was yawning. Doubtless she had got up very early that morning to prepare for her journey. Her eyes closed little by little; her rosy chin sank towards a charming cushion which nature had set to its hand; her finely-gloved hands relaxed, and—my book fell on the floor. It is not an inexcusable downfall to drop at the feet of a pretty woman—especially if those feet be clad in silk.

She had not moved. Her slumber was no trifling cat-nap, but sober, serious, and enduring. It was presumably a family trait, for the father had been snoring gently for some time. Happily, she had not been reading "Fatal Love," which fact cut short certain disquieting suppositions. As these thoughts flashed through my brain, I stopped to pick up the book. Alas! My happiness did not last long. No, she had not bought the book, for on the fly-leaf I found these lines, which I recognised, for I had written them myself!

"To Monsieur Z——
(Of the Académie Française).

"Dear master, allow one whom you do not know to offer you the homage of this humble book, as a token of respectful admiration for your sublime genius."

But then—this apoplectic and neglected person, sleeping in the corner was—oh, joy!—he was the famous writer, Z——! And he had noticed my book, for he had taken it with him. He allowed—who knows? perhaps he had advised—his child to read it.

I must profit by this unhoped-for meeting. I had fully six hours to spend with my Academician—more than enough to assure myself of his vote, which, according to my aunt, would carry with it thirty-nine others. There was no reason why I should not begin operations on him through his daughter. It was a roundabout way to reach my end, but what a charming detour! Imagine a brunette, with red and pouting lips, a figure with pure and striking outlines, suggestive of everything but the Academy and its prizes.

But I must think of my book. Poor book; the leaves were not yet cut, and if matters went on this way they might never be. So I drew forth my penknife and began cutting the pages. The rustling of the leaves awoke my neighbour, who looked astonished at my occupation.

"Sir," she began, reaching out her hand to recover her property.

"Allow me to save you a little trouble," I replied. "It will take only a minute."

She thanked me with a smile. I saw that she regarded me with a certain complaisance; evidently I did not displease her. Now was my chance to get to business.

"Besides, I have almost a right to do it," I continued, throwing into my face a word of meaning.

"A right?" she repeated, opening her eyes wide.

"Why, yes; for if you will permit me to introduce myself, I am the author, the humble and obscure author of this book."

"Then, sir, you are an author?" she said, with a somewhat disdainful tone.

"I have that honour, for I do not doubt it is an honour in your eyes. You must know many of the leading litterateurs of the day."

"Quite a number come to our house, but they are mostly old men."

"Papa keeps a sharp eye on his daughter," thought I; then I remembered the business I had on hand.

"Do you think your father will do me the honour to glance over this modest effort? I need not tell you how important such indorsement as his——"

"He is not my father, he is my uncle. Do you know him?"

"By reputation, of course. What talent he has!"

She nodded her head in approval. "Unfortunately," she said, "he is growing old, and one is soon worn out in his vocation. We have had a busy house this season; several large dinners every week, and my poor uncle has been just rushed to death."

"That is one of the consequences of being a great man. But he will be able to rest now. You are going to the country, doubtless."

"Don't imagine that country life will be a rest. In Burgundy the dinners are simply endless."

"Ah!" I exclaimed; "you are going to Burgundy?"

"Yes, to Champrive."

"To the Duchess's? Shall you be there long?"

"All the autumn. Do you know the neighbourhood?"

"I visited that superb residence some years ago. What would you say if I visited you there in a few days?"

She seemed astonished, and stared at me as if to see if I were speaking seriously.

"It would only be," I continued, "to learn what you think

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of my book, and if you have the goodness, after having read it, to say a good word for it to your uncle."

She burst out laughing—a pearly, rippling, delicious laugh.

"You're joking," she said; "you wouldn't come to see me."

"Not to see you? Why not? You shall see. Promise me, though, that in the meantime you will not have forgotten him who will carry for ever in his heart"—the uncle still slept like a dormouse—"the memory of your exquisite grace and beauty?"

She was not foolish enough to be angry, for, bold as were my words, my manner was perfectly respectful. We talked of everything—of Paris and Burgundy, theatres and hunting, the Duchesse de Champrive, whom she evidently knew very intimately, but on whom she expressed herself with a reserve which seemed to me in excellent taste. I even dared to ask her name, which she gave, with adorable ingenuousness:

"Félicie Legerot."

"Your uncle is not your father's brother, then," I remarked, "for you have not the same name."

What more shall I say? The journey was a dream. At Tonnerre, where the train stopped for luncheon, I had the honour to escort her to the buffet, for the Academician, "tortured," he said, "by an atrocious headache," had refused to get out. Worthy man! I served his niece with the same assiduity I would have served a queen.

When I alighted at Dijon I had not made much progress as regards my literary future, but I certainly had no cause to complain of that which I had made in Félicie's affections. In the Blaisy tunnel (5,000 feet long) I had devoured her hands with kisses, and I had whispered, "I shall see you again soon," to her, emphasising the words with a passionate pressure of her supple fingers.

"But it is impossible," she protested, though not angrily. "You must not attempt to see me again, M. Lejeune."

"Come, come," I exclaimed with a happy laugh, "haven't you guessed that Lejeune is a literary pseudonym?" And bringing my lips a little nearer her pink ear than perhaps strict decorum would permit, I confided to my pretty neighbour the honourable name and title my ancestors had bequeathed me.

Under any other circumstances Félicie's reply would have seemed a little hard on my literary pride.

"There," she exclaimed, "I thought all the time you didn't look like a real author."

Her uncle had finally wakened up, and I spoke to him just as the train stopped.

"Dear master," I said, "I have respected the repose needful to a great intellect like yours. Let me assure you, however, of my strong desire to be presented to you soon at the Duchess's. Though you do not suspect it, you see before you a petitioner for your good offices."

He seemed surprised, but made no effort to understand me.

"Sir," said he, cordially, "if it is anything that lies in my province you may count on me." And we shook hands warmly.

The reader need not be told after what manœuvres I found myself a week later at the Duchesse de Champrive's, who invited me to luncheon a few days later.

I was thinking too much of Félicie to pay attention to anything else, and you can imagine my disappointment when, as we entered the dining-room I saw that neither she nor her uncle were among the company. What had happened? They told me they were to be the Duchess's guests until the end of the autumn.

Profiting by a moment of silence, I determined to ask for them.

"Has our distinguished friend Z—— left you, madame?" I asked, raising my voice; "I hoped to meet him here."

"He did not come this year. Do you know him?"

"Only enough to have offered him a book which——"

"I thought as much. So you are an author, sir. Our friend Z—— lent me your book, recommending it as the work of a compatriot. I read it and found it charming."

"What," I insisted, "M. Z—— has not come! Why, I travelled down here with him the other day; he was coming here with his niece."

"His niece?"

"Yes, madame. She has a great admiration for you. She is extremely pretty, and so sensible, too."

"Z——'s niece? Do you know her name?"

"Mademoiselle Félicie Legerot."

Madame de Champrive crushed me with a look. The Duke seemed astonished, and glanced at me in a droll manner out of the corner of his eye. And as I was mechanically staring at the butler, who stood opposite me, I saw the face of that grave man express stupefaction so profound that I intuitively felt I had committed some horrible blunder.

A silence reigned for a minute, and then they began to talk of something else. For the time being I decided not to open my mouth again, even to eat, for my appetite was gone. If it had rested with me, the château would have caught fire immediately, so that I could have escaped under cover of the confusion. But I had to sit there and wait for the end of the dinner, pretending to find the conversation highly diverting.

Finally the suggestion was made that some guests from Paris and I should inspect the château. That over, I hoped to ask for my tilbury and escape to my own roof, hoping that, sooner or later, some chance would reveal to me the fatal error I had committed, of which I vainly sought to imagine the nature and extent.

That chance was not long in coming.

As we descended to the kitchen, the Duchess keeping me at her side, do you know whom I saw in cap, apron, and shirt sleeves, standing before the immense range? Simply Z——, the Academician, or rather the false Z——, fatter, redder than in the railway car, but not asleep this time, for he was in the act of preparing an *aspic de volaille* for dinner.

And do you know whom I saw enter by another door, in a coquettish white apron, and carrying a kettle that she had doubtless just filled with hot water? Félicie Legerot in person. The young unknown, whose hands I had kissed with impetuous ardour in the Blaisy tunnel, was the Duchess's maid. He whom I had taken for the famous writer Z—— was the cook, and "Fatal Love," the cause of all this confusion, had been filched by Félicie from her mistress.

We—Félicie, her uncle, and I—must have looked unspeakably funny as we recognised each other, for the Duchesse de Champrive could not restrain herself, and, in spite of her dignity, had to lean against one of the pillars that supported the roof to laugh at her ease. As for Félicie, she fled to the next room, where I heard her shriek with laughter.

All this happened ten years ago, and never since then have I been seen at Champrive. I have met the Duchess once or twice in Paris, but I hope she did not recognise me. If she did it certainly was not my fault.

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OLD SLATER'S LOVE STORY.

THE sloop of war *Antelope* stood off Gonave.

The sun's gold disc had disappeared and the sweet melancholy of a southern twilight lay upon the Island, whose profile, darkly outlined against the saffron-hued sky, was set in an amethyst frame, the deep and luminous violet of the sea. Briefly, the tropic twilight is short; its *silhouette* hung there between the two immensities of sky and sea, then the jewel colours of wave, and cloud, and wood-draped island vanished —a velvety blackness covered all.

On the spar-deck of the *Antelope*, seamen Bill Williams and Sam Woods, apprentice Stubbs, and the Jack of the Dust were matching experiences. The boatswain's mate listened, without commenting. Old Slater commented, without listening. From time to time he left his messmates, to lean over the rail. Fixing his eyes on Gonave with that interest which we give to something which marks an event in our lives, he wagged his head so knowingly that Stubbs and Dusty—men of one poem, so to speak—were visibly envious. At length the old seaman took his place among them. He began at once to speak:

"Hev I ever tol' ye of 'n adventure me an' the Exec'tive had on thet ther' island?"

"Give us the first line, Mr. Slater, and we'll tell you," replied the Jack of the Dust, jauntily.

"Ketch a-hol' o' yerself, Dusty," recommended old Slater. "Et ain't no comic piece. Et's 'bout a gal. A little bit of er gal—yaller's gol'."

The Jack of the Dust's expression changed; he had but just begun the study of the "eternal feminine," and his desire for phenomena was still unsatisfied.

"Fire away," he said cordially. "I guess it's a good one this time."

"Do you mean the *Antelope's* 'First Luff'?" questioned Stubbs.

"Ther same," old Slater replied.

"That porpoise?" exclaimed the Jack of the Dust.

"He wuzn't no porpoise then, lad," said the storyteller. "They called 'im ther 'Dandy Ensign'—he wuz Ensign Fitz in them days—an' 'Gentleman Jack' an' 'Han'some Jack,' an' 'e wuz purty near all thet, fer 'e wuz clear pink 'n white; 'e hedn't no airs, an' 'e wuz plucky as the nex' one.

"Me an' him hed been on ther *Bender* two year, an' one cruise in these 'ere waters, ther skipper—no sailor-man 't all he wuzn't—took et inter 'is blame ol' head ter come up 'ere from Port o' Prince, whar we wuz havin' more fun than 'nuff, fer gun practice. No matter 'bout what we done. Though I rec'lec' our Divis'n Cap'n got 'n eye blowed out, an' seed more 'n ever after thet, et havin' quick'ned his 'magination. One mornin' Fitz he come ter me an' sez, 'I've got ter get out er this.'

"'I'm goin' 'shore shootin',' sez he. 'Git leave an' come 'long, Slater; mebbe we'll strike sumthin'.'

"I know'd he wanted me ter pull ther boat, so I got leave an' we went 'shore an' shot wil' roun' thar er while, then 'e got 'nuff an' propos'd er bite of the rations I'd fetched. I set 'em out under a big coco-palm, an' Fitz 'e got conf'dential over mess, and began ter talk 'bout the Creole gal he'd got 'quainted with in Port o' Prince. Fitz 'e sed 'e loved 'er 'madly,' an' a lot more that I knowed by 'eart, fer 'e loved easy an' of'en in them days, an' swore 'e'd make 'er Missis Fitz ef 'e 'ad ter give up 'is fambly—'s mother havin' given 'im warnin' that she wouldn't hev no furrin graft on ter ther Fitz tree. While he wuz a-ravin' we 'earn sumthin' an' looked roun'. Thar she stood!"

"The Creole?" interrupted the Jack of the Dust.

"No; the yaller gal," Old Slater answered, "lookin' like 'er leetle gol' statyure in 'er garden, with all ther green stuff back on 'er. She was jes so slim an' still. I reck'n she wuz 'bout twel' year ol'."

"A kid!" exclaimed the Jack of the Dust.

"Don't ye go a-jumpin', Dusty," said Old Slater; "she wuz out er the nus'ry."

"They ripen early in these 'ere lat'tudes, Dusty. They don't hev nuthing ter keep 'em back, which ever edication will an' too many strings roun' ther wais'," Bill Williams remarked, with the air of a Reformer.

"But the little golden girl?" ventured Stubbs.

Old Slater continued: "Fitz jumped up when he see her, an' motions 'er ter come an' hev a bite, an' 'long she steps, easy 'n' light 's a kitten, an' se' down side o' 'im. She couldn't never hev seed no sech rations, but she wuzn't took back. She eat 's nat'ral 's a bird picks up crumbs. Thet, my lads," with a glance at the apprentice and the Jack of the Dust, "thet wuz 'cause she wuz thurerbred—they shows their grain fust off. Don't fergit thet when ye're lookin' fer somethin' ter 'dorn yer 'omes."

"I ain't looking for *savages*," returned the Jack of the Dust. "I like a woman with some style; that has seen something of the world, and knows her way about better than to mess with two strange men in the jungle."

"Let me tell ye, Dusty," said Old Slater, gravely, "a gal's got ter be equil ter the occasion, whether ye find 'er in ther jungle or'in ther Whitechapel Road. Ef she hain't got ther knack fer *thet* she ain't got nothin' ter build on."

"I ain't asking anybody for points!" blazed the Jack of the Dust.

"Hush up!" said Stubbs.

Silence being assured, the old seaman resumed his narrative:

"Fitz 'e begun ter talk ter 'er in Creole. Et 'it ther mark, but she hedn't much ter say: she'd never seed nuthin' like 'im, an' was all carried 'way with 'is pink 'n' white. So thar she sot, 'er great, big black eyes full o' witch-looks, a-listenin' to 'is talk, an' answerin' up sof' 's er leetle bird peeps, when 'e asked 'er sumthin' d'rect. 'Twuz plain 'nuff ter me thet she wuz clean gone on 'im, so *I* went ter sleep—thar ain't no bigger blunder, Dusty, than fer er man ter keep 'wake when thar ain't gals nuff ter go roun'; 'e ain't goin' ter be pop'lar in any s'ciety ef 'e makes *thet* slip."

"Much obliged, but I've got ahead of a-b ab," the Jack of the Dust said, with fine irony.

Old Slater continued calmly:

"When I woke up they wuz a kissin' of one another like mad. Mimi—thet wuz 'er name—wuz a-callin' of Fitz '*Doudoux*' ev'ry other word, an' 'e wuz bustin' with pride an' vanity."

"Well, I wuz equil to et! I hedn't been ten year on the flagship fer nuthin'. I hed dyplom'cy 'nuff fer 'n adm'ral, an' kep' my eyes a-rovin', and list'n'd to Fitz makin' of himself out ther 'ero o' combats he'd never ben in, without blinkin'. But when ther bats begun ter sweep roun' over'ead in er percession, I know'd 'nuff ter know we b'long'd on ther *Bender*, an' I calls Fitz down an' gits a move on 'im.

"Mimi, she wa'n't fer sayin' good-bye, an' she trots 'long with us ter ther shore, an' when 'e sed 'e'd love 'er alwus, an' promised ter come ther nex' day an' stay for ever, she let 'im git inter ther gig. She stood thar, a-watching' after 'im. I kin see 'er yit! Leetle slim gal, 'er blue cotton gownd, belayed at ther wais' with er green and yaller string, half coverin' of 'er, a-callin', '*Adieu, Doudoux, adieu!*' in a voice sof' 's velvit—jes' ther sperit o' the islan'! 'Slater,' sez Fitz, when we was clear o' moorin's, 'et's a great ol' world!' Then 'e waits er while an' sez—'e wuz smilin' free, like a lad—'Why, that leetle gal 's ther light o' my life.'"

"What about the Creole lady?" questioned the Jack of the Dust. "Your 'Dandy Ensign' didn't need transfer papers for his affections, did he?"

"I entered right inter et," continued Old Slater, slightly raising his voice. "An' I let 'im say the same thing a 'undred diff'rent ways till we wuz 'longside ther *Bender*, then sez 'e, 'I'll see 'er ter-morrer, Slater!'"

"But we didn't get off so easy. Ther skipper had ther dyspepsy ther nex' day—thar wuzn't no liberty fer ennybody, an' he wuz sorry he couldn't stop the sun from shinin'. He kep' this up for his 'musement 'till ther end o' ther week. Fitz, he was blame near crazy, an' I sez, 'Try 'em on goin' 'shore for butterflies.'

"Et went, fer 'e wuz knowed ter be a great entymol'gist in them days, an' we got off. Then Fitz, 'e took at outen me!

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'E wuz goin' ter marry thet leetle gal ef 'e 'ad ter quit ther service, an' live under a cabbage-palm ther rest o' 'is life. She was wuth et! 'E named er king thet married whar 'e wanted ter, an' wuzn't never sorry—but 'e didn't mention no ev'ry-day man thet 'ad the same run o' luck. 'E sed she wuz er match for enny Duchess—an' I reck'n 'twaz so, ther only Duchess *I* ever see bein' yeller 's er saffron bag, an' ol' at thet. Yes, she wuz ther mos' perfect' leetle gal in ther worl'; an' 'e wuz going' ter hav er, an' prej'dice might go to thunder. 'I tell ye what, Slater,' ses 'e, 'I'll give out she's er princess; they'll knuckle ter *thet*.'

"I wuz so dead set 'ginst thet Creole an' 'er airs thet I 'greed with 'im. 'Thet's so,' sez I. 'Ther gal's got ther royal grain, an' no mistake.'

"Well, Mimi, she wuz on ther shore, an' when 'e see 'er he wuz up on 'is feet. 'Don't git ter sleep, Slater!' sez 'e. 'She's waitin', man, can't ye see?' He was out 'fore ther gig wuz in, an' when I made things fast I follered on. They wuz in ther same place under ther coco-palm, an' Mimi wuz restin' 'ginst Fitz light's er slip o' willer—I ain't ever see anything ter equil ther grace o' them leetle slim niggers; runnin' water ain't smoother nor purtier 'n their ways o' movin', an' jist surroundin' ther man they love——."

"Go 'head," growled Sam Woods.

"Wall, I lef' Fitz an' Mimi an' struck out fer butterflies; after er while I ketched er big black feller, an' thet wuz all I wanted fer er blin', one bein' as misleadin' 's er dozen, an' 'nuff sight easier ter ketch. Then I started back to ther 'rig'nal spot, an' I'd better never hev lef' et.

"Thar sot them two, Mimi makin' no 'bjection ter Fitz's arm snug roun' her wais', an' a-wrigglin' towards 'em, on ther ends o' his foes, wuz as ugly-favoured er knave as I ever see. They wuz sittin' with their backs to 'im an' me, an' in er flash I knowed 'e didn't like what 'e see; thet 'e was Mimi's comp'ny—fathers 'n' brothers ain't interferin' in love 'fairs in these parts—an' thet somebuddy'd got ter pay fer 'is losin' of 'er. I give er jump for'ard an' sung out. Fitz an' Mimi sprung up an' faced roun'.

"Then 'e turned an' see me, an' knowed 'e wusn't goin' ter stand enny show with us two men. I wuz near par'lysed by ther look on 'is face, but 'twuzn't ennythin' ter Mimi's—hate, sech as white wimmen don't feel, wuz ragin' an' blazin' thar. Et told 'im, better 'n words, thet he'd los' grip on 'er, an' ther nigger wuz 'nuff like er white man ter be boun' thet nobuddy else shouldn't hev it. They glared er minnet, mebbe, then what do you think she done?"

"Screeched, of course," said the Jack of the Dust, without hesitation.

"Only white ones screeches an' squeals," said Old Slater.

"What *did* she do?" questioned Stubbs.

"I ain't sayin' but what ther everlastin' woman wuz in et," Old Slater said. "She kinder straightened up fust, then clasped Fitz, a-callin' of 'im er lot o' sweet Creole names—never did them mongrel lisping's soun' sweeter! Then quicker'n I kin tell et a blade flashed in thet nigger's 'an, an' *whiz* et went 'issing through the 'ot air.

"I turned sick, fer I 'lowed Fitz wuz er goner, but *now* I know thet she wuz expectin' of et and wuz willin' ter pay ther price like ther thurerbred she wuz, fer she faced roun' suddent, jes' in front o' Fitz, 'er two arms stretched wide ter shield 'im, and ketched thet knife on 'er bres'-bone!"

"Good enough!" said Jack of the Dust, with hearty, if tardy, appreciation.

"I'd done 'er blame sight too much lookin' on," continued Old Slater, "but I soon put ther 'sassin whar 'e b'longed. Fitz as white 's 'er ghost, wuz a-holding' Mimi. 'Er blood wuz pourin', an' suthin' like er curtin wuz creepin' over 'er eyes, shuttin' out ther light. She tried ter smile—she *was* er Princess, an' I reck'n, too, she wuz satisfied ter knew she'd hev ter knuckle down ter thet nigger man. '*Doudoux*,' sez she, '*adieu*.' Them wuz all the words she spoke, an' no young bird never piped 'good-night' enny softer n' sweeter. Then she tried to put up 'er arms. But 'twusn't in 'em—poor little arms, they dropped, an' she wuz gone."

"Dead," gasped Stubbs.

"Thet's er good name for et in enny lat'tude," replied Old Slater, dryly. He continued in a softer tone: "Fitz laid Mimi down like as ef she wuz er babby, an' 'im an' me kinder straightened of 'er out. I couldn't help wonderin' ef she hed 'er mammy to moan over 'er leetle spent life. We lef' thet nigger whar 'e fell, an' went 'way without er word. Thet night ther *Bender* hauled up 'er anchor, and we went down ter Port o' Prince."

Stubbs sighed.

"Whar thet Creole begun whar she'd lef' off," added Old Slater, savagely.

"How *could* he? Do you mean that he *forgot* Mimi?" cried Stubbs.

"Don't ye go ter gittin' sof', Stubby," said Old Slater. "A man thet's goin' ter mount ter shucks in the service kin forgit *ennything!*"

"But when she died for him!" persisted Stubbs.

"She didn't feel et none to speak on," Old Slater said, with conviction. "Wimmen are made so 's they kin die easy fer ther men they love."

"Don't git 'xcited, lad," advised Bill Williams. "Ye ain't got nuthin' ter do with et; ther Lord he made 'em ter fill their places."

Old Slater was seemingly searching some chamber of his memory. At length he said:

"White ones, mebbe, dies a *leetle* harder, an' they ain't *quite* so likely ter do it, but colour don't make no great difference."

"White ones feel—and die!"

It was the boatswain's mate, and he spoke in a voice which forbade contradiction. "*She*——" but his voice broke; he paused on that word, stayed by thoughts too bitter to express. He walked away, without looking at his companions.

"Well, much obliged, Mr. Slater," said the Jack of the Dust; "she was a dandy, and no mistake."

He, too, walked away, followed by Stubbs. Old Slater looked after the apprentice.

"Humph," said he, with a short laugh. "Thet lad's heart aches an' he dunno *why*. *Thet's youth*."

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Miss Lizzie Ruggles.

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THE OUTLAWS OF THE AIR.

By GEORGE GRIFFITH,

Author of "The Angel of the Revolution," "The Syren of the Skies," &c.

SUMMARY.

MAX RENAULT—leading spirit of Anarchist Autonomie Group No. 7, who has joined the Utopians (a Socialistic colony on an island in the South Pacific) in order to steal the air-ship they are building, which he succeeds in doing.

FRANZ HARTOG—a German engineer, in league with Renault, who steals a very fast torpedo-boat destroyer from the Russian Government to levy blackmail on the Atlantic.

SIR HARRY MILTON—a wealthy young English nobleman, who by chance comes across the island of Utopia, and subsequently devotes the whole of his fortune to hunting down Renault and Hartog.

HERBERT WYNDHAM—a lieutenant in the British Navy who is travelling with Sir Harry for the benefit of his health, and who resigns his commission and couples his energies with those of Sir Harry in destroying the Anarchists, on account of the fact that he has been stabbed by Renault when the latter attempts to carry off Violet in the air-ship.

FREDERICK AUSTEN—the inventor of the Utopian air-ship, who shares its secret with Edward Adams, Dr. Edwards, and Ambrose Millar, three other Utopians.

VIOLET MILTON—Sir Harry's sister, and Lieutenant Wyndham's sweetheart, is permanently crippled by throwing herself out of the air-ship on which Renault has tried to carry her off.

DORA MERTON—a fair Utopian, who has made an impression on Sir Harry.

LUCY SUMMERS—another fair Utopian.

Renault in the air-ship *Vengeur*, and Hartog in the torpedo-boat *Destroyer*, levy blackmail on the high seas. Just as they have annihilated a combined British, French, and Portuguese fleet sent to discover them, Mr. Maxim's aeroplane, the *Britannia*, comes on the scene and is captured by the *Vengeur*.

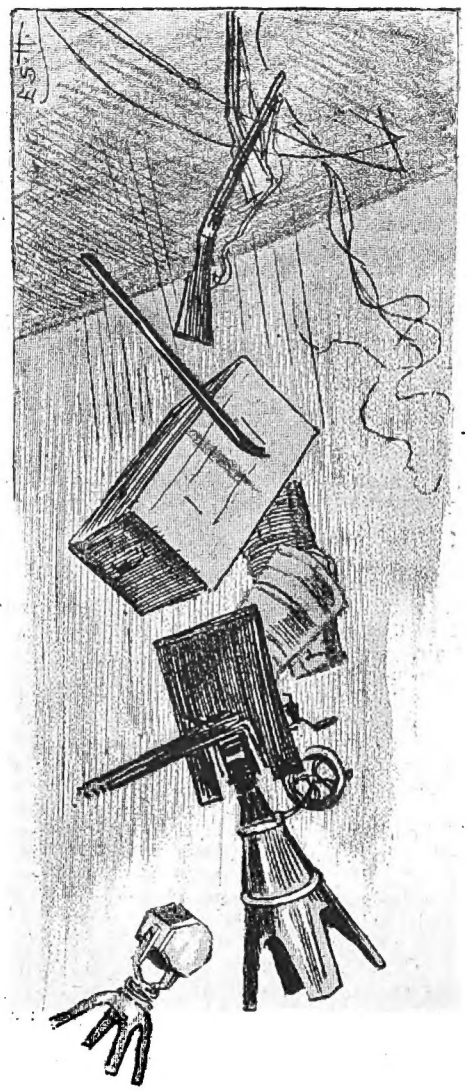
CHAPTER XXI.

A VICTORY OF TACTICS.

IN less time than it would take to describe the operation, the guns, ammunition, and all heavy movable *impedimenta* were flung overboard from the car of the *Britannia*, and, after the first to-and-fro rocking movement consequent on the violent wrenching off of the guiding-planes and the throwing overboard of the heavy weights had ceased, the whole machine began to settle gently down with ever-decreasing speed as the denser air was reached, until, at a height of four thousand feet above the sea, the downward motion was so slight as to be almost imperceptible.

In fact the *Britannia* had become a huge parachute, and was exactly fulfilling the prediction that her inventor had made years before when he said that his aeroplane, if crippled in mid-air, would alight as gently as a bird coming to rest after a flight. But she was not destined to continue her descent uninterrupted. The grapnel descended again, this time in front, and hooked on to the forward midships stay which connected the aeroplane with the car. As soon as it was firmly hitched on there was a gentle forward pull, and the *Britannia* slowly swung round and headed towards the coast, which was now about twenty miles distant.

"I wonder what the deuce the fellow's up to now," said Lieutenant Pelham, who had already recovered his composure, on finding that, for the present at least, the *Britannia* was not to be destroyed. "I may as well hail him and find out, if he'll tell me."



All impedimenta were flung overboard.

He went forward to the bow of the car, and looking up, saw, as he expected, that the victor in the so far bloodless duel was towing the *Britannia* by means of a long wire rope attached to the grapnel. The first thing he saw was the barrel of a Maxim gun protruding from an after port in the air-ship's hull, and trained on the car of the *Britannia*.

"Air-ship, ahoy! Where are you taking us to, and what are you going to do with us?"

There was no answer for a few moments. Then a window slide was withdrawn close to the port hole, and Max Renault put his arms on the sill of the window, leant out, and said:

"Who are you, may I ask?"

"I am Lieutenant Pelham in command of the air-ship *Britannia*, and——"

"*Late* in command, I suppose you mean," interrupted Max with a short laugh. "It doesn't seem to strike you that I've taken you and your mechanical kite prisoners of war, and that I can blow you into little pieces whenever I like. However, Lieutenant Pelham, I don't want to be rude or to take any ungentlemanly advantage of my position. If you admit the logic of circumstances, and are prepared to surrender and haul that flag down——'

"I'll see you—well, civilised first,' and then I won't!" retorted the lieutenant with an energy that was quite justifiable under the circumstances. "Fire away, and be hanged to you!"

"Oh, I don't want to insist upon trifles," replied Max with imperturbable good-humour. "If it pleases you to keep the flag flying, do so by all means. It's only a matter of form, after all. And even if you don't want to surrender, you needn't do so, only, if you finger the handle of that revolver any more, or anybody is foolish enough to shoot, I shall just cast off and let you drop. You'll make very good target practice for my fellows with their Maxims as you are going down. But there, it's no use fooling, do you mean to continue the fight or not?"

"No, we don't," said the Lieutenant biting an oath off short between his teeth. "How the deuce can we? Of course, you can send us into the sea in little pieces if you like. The only question is, on what terms you will refrain from doing so."

"Ah, now we shall begin to understand one another," said Max, still smiling and still speaking in the same even tones that he had used throughout the brief interview. "My terms are these—and you can accept them or reject them as it pleases you. First, will you give me your word of honour, as a gentleman and a British officer, that no one on board that thing of yours will fire a shot or commit any other act of violence as long as no violence is offered to any of you?"

While he was speaking, Captain Maxwell had joined the Lieutenant in

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the bow of the car. Pelham looked at him inquiringly, and he said:

"I don't see why you shouldn't. We are beaten in this fight, and there's an end of it. You've no right to sacrifice the lives of your people, or even yourself, in what would simply be a cold-blooded murder. You'd better say yes."

"Very well," said the Lieutenant to Max. "I consent, on condition that we are treated honourably, as prisoners of war would be treated between honourable and civilised combatants."

Max passed by the plainly implied sneer with a laugh, as he could afford to do, and replied:

"Certainly. I don't propose to harm any of you, if you accept my conditions."

"Very well," said the Lieutenant. "What are they?"

"I am going to tow you to the coast as near as I can to one of the Canary Islands, or to within reach of some town on the coast. There you will land and shift for yourselves, on giving your parole that you will keep to the north and give no information about what has occurred to-day for three full days and nights from now. After that, you may say and do what you please."

Lieutenant Pelham looked inquiringly at Captain Maxwell again. The Captain thought for a moment, and then nodded.

"Yes," said the Lieutenant, in reply to Max. "We can consent to that, and if we do I presume you guarantee all our lives and personal safety. And now, perhaps you won't mind telling us who and what you are, and the name of that really wonderful craft which I suppose you command."

"I am Max Renault, Anarchist and Outlaw, and this is the Anarchist air-ship *Vengeur*. I suppose you have heard of her before, and I can promise you that you shall hear of her again. In fact, I may say that I am making arrangements to build a fleet like her, and then—well, then I should advise your so-called civilised Governments to resign and get into private life as fast as ever they can, because I propose to make things very hot for people that I disagree with.

"We Anarchists have a lot of grudges to pay off, you know; and when we get the upper hand, as we shall have in a very short time, we propose to pay them in full and take no change."

"My dear sir, if you propose to make a speech on practical anarchy," interrupted the Lieutenant coolly, "I would suggest that the audience is both limited and unsympathetic, and the occasion hardly suitable. In fact, if you go on talking such senseless nonsense, I shall withdraw what I've said, do my best to spoil your plans by putting a bullet into you, and then let your comrades do their worst."

"Pluckily spoken under the circumstances!" said Max with an ironical laugh. "Still, I didn't propose to make a speech—and deeds, after all, are more eloquent than words. Adieu then for the present, make yourselves comfortable, and I will land you safely on the coast as soon as possible: By the way, oblige me by starting that other screw of yours. It will help us on our way."

With that he drew his head in, and the slide shot across the window, but the muzzle of the Maxim gun still remained grinning out of its port hole at the car of the *Britannia*. The *Vengeur* now quickened her speed considerably, and the *Britannia*, supported by her aeroplane and driven by her single screw, was towed at a speed of about forty miles an hour in a north-easterly direction towards the coast.

In less than an hour she had gained the land, and then the *Vengeur*, taking a more northerly course, towed her along until a small Arab settlement was sighted some ten miles ahead. There she was allowed to settle quietly to the ground, and her crew disembarked, sad and angry, but still thankful to escape with their lives from an encounter in which no credit could possibly have been gained under the circumstances, save the empty glory of defiance to the end, which would simply have resulted in not a man being left alive to tell the tale of the disastrous cruise of the *Britannia*.

Renault allowed them to depart with their arms, money, and

Pelham looked at him inquiringly.

such provisions and personal effects as they could carry; and so they set off to make the best of their mournful way to the Arab settlement.

They had scarcely gone five hundred yards from where the *Britannia* was lying with the *Vengeur* beside her on top of the sand cliffs, when Peter Jackson, the late coxwain of the *Britannia*, who was lagging behind the rest of the party, suddenly and without a word faced about, dropped on his knee, and opened fire with his magazine rifle on three or four of the *Vengeur's* men who were standing in a group near the broken propeller of the aeroplane. Two of them rolled over, and then the Maxim in the stern of the *Vengeur*, which had been kept trained on the retreating party, sent a stream of flame and bullets from its muzzle, and Jackson paid the penalty of his rash and, in fact, treacherous deed, and doubled up in a heap and dropped on the sand.

Three other sailors who had run back towards him also dropped in their tracks. Then the fire of the Maxim stopped, and Taxil, followed by three of the *Vengeur's* men with rifles at the ready, ran forward and called on the survivors of the party to throw down their arms and surrender. The Lieutenant and Captain Maxwell at once dropped their rifles and walked quickly towards them. Taking no apparent notice of the levelled rifles Pelham advanced to Taxil and said in French:

"I hope you don't think that that man fired by my orders. I'd have shot him myself before I'd have allowed him to do it, if I'd have known what his intention was. If you don't believe me, shoot."

Taxil looked at him straight in the eyes for a moment. If he had shown a sign of flinching, his doom and that of his remaining companions would have been sealed, but his eyes never wavered, and not a muscle of his face moved.

"You're a brave man," said Taxil lowering his rifle; "and therefore you don't tell lies. I believe you, so go on your way in peace. Even we outlaws, you know, are not without honour—sometimes. Adieu! Don't look back, or you'll be fired on."

Pelham bowed in silence and turned on his heel and walked back to where Jackson was lying with his two remaining shipmates bending over him. He was still alive when they reached him, though almost riddled with bullets.

"What did you do that for, Jackson?" asked Pelham sternly, as soon as he saw that the man was still conscious. "It was a dirty trick, unworthy an English sailor, and it might have cost the lives of every one of us."

"I couldn't help it, sir," gasped the man with almost his

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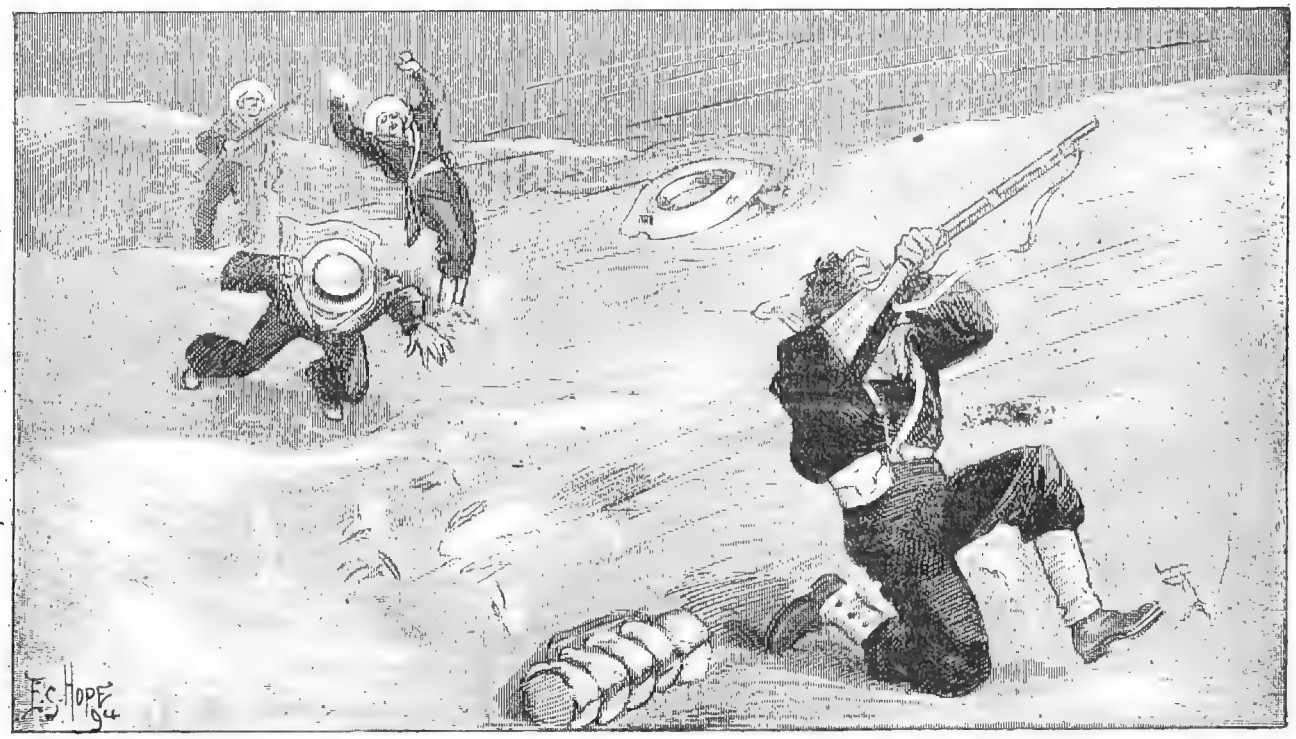
last breath. "So help me, God, I couldn't, and if I've killed that chap that told you to haul the flag down I—oh——"

The rest was lost in a gurgling rattle in the man's throat. He made a brief, desperate struggle for breath, and then the rising blood choked him, and he dropped back dead in the arms of the shipmate who was holding him up.

"Poor beggar!" said Captain Maxwell turning away with a shudder. "I suppose he acted according to his lights. Who knows, perhaps he killed that cynical scoundrel who commanded the air-ship, and if he's done that he may have changed the history of the world. Still, they treated us about as fairly as they could. But there, it's no use arguing. He's paid the best price he could for the mistake he made.

"Come along Pelham, it's no use stopping here, and it's no good trying to bury these poor chaps, for the jackals would have eaten them, all the same, before morning. Let us get away before those fellows change their minds and shoot what is left of us down. We may be of some use to the Old Country yet."

The Lieutenant saw the justness of his reasoning, and so with heavy hearts the four survivors of the lost *Britannia* shouldered their rifles and the few possessions they had brought away with them, and set out on their ten-mile tramp over the desert towards the Settlement.



Jackson paid the penalty of his rash . . . deed.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Result of Peter Jackson's Shot.

Captain Maxwell had come nearer the truth than he thought in his supposition that one of Jackson's bullets might have killed Renault, and so, by quenching the master-spirit of the outlaws of the air, have changed the history of the world.

When Jackson fired Max was standing examining the broken propeller in order to see if the shaft had been strained by the wrench, and so to judge how long it would take to fit one of the spare propellers of the *Vengeur* in its place. Of the five shots which emptied the magazine of the sailor's rifle, two had struck him. One drilled a clean hole through his right shoulder-blade, glanced upwards, broke the collar-bone and passed out shattering the jaw of a man who stood close beside him. The other one pierced his left arm a couple of inches above the elbow, chipped a clean piece out of the bone, and flew away out to sea without doing further damage.

Stunned by the double shock, he rolled over as though one of the bullets had pierced his brain, and did not recover consciousness until the *Vengeur*, with the *Britannia* in tow, had borne him to the inlet and was sinking gently down towards the shore near which the *Destroyer* and the *Pilgrim* were already lying.

Fortunately for him among the numerous company of recruits that the yacht had brought out was a highly skilled French surgeon, named Vaillac Fargeau, a man of high scientific and general culture who, like Féneon, Jean Grave, and Réclus, had become, from really honest if perverted convictions, deeply imbued with the terrible doctrines of the Propaganda by Force, and so had thrown in his lot with the outlaws. He at once went on board the *Vengeur* and lost no time in examining Max's wounds, setting the broken bone, and allaying the inflammation. Max was now perfectly conscious again, and was all impatience to know how long it would be before he could resume the active command of the *Vengeur*.

"At least three weeks' perfect rest will be absolutely necessary," said the doctor when he had finished his work. "In that time I hope you will be able to use your left arm a little; your right must not be moved for quite a month from now."

"*Mille tonnerres*, doctor! but that is impossible," exclaimed Max. "It would ruin all our plans, and perhaps, who knows, the whole course of events would be altered by such a delay. No one can and no one shall command the *Vengeur* but myself, and we must start at once for the South Pacific."

"And equally, my dear Monsieur Max," said Fargeau with quiet firmness, "it would not only alter but ruin all your plans and the hopes of your comrades if the inflammation spread to the lung, which is already injured, and deprived us, as it well might do, of the leader on whom everything depends. Believe me, it is so. The penalty for not following my instructions would be a long lingering illness which might weaken you for

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He rolled over.

life and perhaps, as I say, cut short your life itself. The plans must go for the present. You are of far more mportance than they, whatever they are."

"And to tink," broke in Hartog who was standing by the couch on which Max lay—"to tink dat all dis has happened just because you let dose fellows go instead of drowing dem into de sea when you might haf done it so comfortably. I vould haf blowed dem and dere miserable kite into fifty tousand pieces before I vould haf let von of dem go.

"You are kind to dem, you treat dem honourably, and set dem loose to go and tell tales about us, and den, by tam, one of dem turns round and shoots you. I haf always said dere is only one goot policy in var; you kill your enemy ven you haf de chance and den you haf done mit him. You spare him and he turns up some day and puts some bullets into you. Oh, Max, Max, I did not tink it of you!"

Renault heard the little German's harangue to the end with a smile, then he said, without any appearance of anger at his reproaches:

"Yes, yes, Hartog, that's all right as far as theory goes; but you know when we agreed to destroy everybody, we didn't count on the appearance of the aeroplane, and really those three fellows on the *Devon* and the lieutenant who commanded the *Britannia* showed such splendid pluck, and took their licking so well, that I don't believe even you would have had the heart to kill them in cold blood if you'd been in my place."

"Ah, vouldn't I!" ejaculated Hartog with a savage glint through his spectacles. "I vould haf turned de Maxim on dem like a hose on a fire, and by de red beard of Barbarossa I vould haf put dem out too. No, mein friend, mercy is no goot; it is foolishness only fit for vat dey called civilised peoples."

"All the same," replied Max. "I had an object in what I did. I meant those fellows to go back to England and tell what they had seen with their own eyes. I wanted them to prove to the British Government that they might as well send a lot of carrier-pigeons against us as things like that aeroplane. That is why I took it from them without firing a shot; just to show them how helpless they were.

"I can tell you the moral effect of that would be worth the sparing of a good many lives. Of course, I never dreamt that the blackguard of a sailor would disobey orders and do as he did. However, what's done is done. The question is, what are we to do now?"

"You must not talk any more for the present, Monsieur Max," interposed Fargeau, holding his hand up to stop Hartog, who was just beginning to speak. "You have talked too much already. I shall give you a sleeping draught now, and you must sleep for at least six hours in perfect quiet; after that, if no fresh danger appears, you may make your plans. Now, Monsieur Hartog, you must go," he continued, putting his hand on the engineer's arm. "It is really necessary. I would not say so if it were not so."

"Just one more word, Doctor, and I'll obey," said Max, who was too sensible not to see that Fargeau's course was the right one. "Hartog, whatever happens, we must get out of here with all the ships as soon as possible. It would be ruin to be found here with me in this state. Get up steam on all the ships and be ready to work out after nightfall. Clear away the upper deck of the *Bremen* so that the *Vengeur* can be laid along it. I'll tell Taxil what to do. Now then, Doctor, let's have your sleeping draught, and I'll behave myself."

It was then a little after mid-day, and Renault slept soundly until nearly seven. When he woke the Doctor found that the inflammation had subsided very favourably, and pronounced him fit to make the necessary arrangements with Hartog.

Meanwhile, the engineer with every man at his command had been working hard making preparations to leave the inlet. All the treasure and stores had been stowed on board the *Bremen*, a fresh supply of fuel had been prepared for the *Destroyer*, the liner's four masts had been cut down, and a clear space over two hundred feet long had been made aft for the air-ship to rest upon. Shortly after seven, therefore, Hartog had a *tête-à-tête* with Renault for the purpose of determining on future plans.

"Well, friend Franz, have you found any way out of this infernal hole while I have been asleep?" said Renault to begin with.

"Vell, mein frient, I haf been doing some tinking, and so far as I can see de best dat ve can do unter de circumstances is dis. In de first place, everyting is ready to leave de inlet insides of an hour; secondly, as de *Pilgrim* has brought out between fifty and sixty recruits, goot smart fellows all of dem, mechanics and engineers and some sailors, I tink dat, if ve send Marcel home again mit as small a crew as possible to get de machines and tings made for de air-ships vat I haf given him de plans and drawings for, ve can find men enough now to man de *Bremen* and take her round de Horn. It vill take us quite a month to get to Utopia, but dat ve cannot help. It vill give you time to get vell, and ven ve get dere you can take command of de *Vengeur* and clear dose peoples out."

"Supposing always that they're there still."

"It is not unlikely dat dey vill be dere. They know dat you had no weapons and no ammunition. Dey vill believe dat you vill go somevere and get dem made, and dey know dat vill take some tree or four monds. Now it vould take dem longer dan dat to build and arm anoder air-ship for demselves, and I don't tink dey vill leave before dey have made one, always supposing dat you have successfully destroyed de *Nautilus*.

"But, at any rate, I suppose you must haf damaged her very much, and she vill take a long time to repair. You may be sure dat dey vill not go avay mit only de yacht and dere oder steamer, because dey know it vould be perfectly easy for us to lie in vait for dem up near de entrance to de Panama Canal and sink dem both before dey could say dere prayers. Besides, I do not tink dey vould have room to take de whole lot in de two ships, and you can bet dey vould not leave any behind if dey are such civilised merciful sort of people as you say dey are. Now vat do you tink of dat for a scheme?"

Max, who had been thinking hard while Hartog was talking, saw that under the circumstances there was really no other plan that they could pursue that promised anything like the same safety and reasonable hope of

A clear space had been made aft for the air-ship.

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destroying the colony of Utopia, so after a few moments' silence he said:

"No, I don't see anything else for it. That's the best thing to be done, Franz, and we'll do it. Just send Taxil here and I'll tell him how to lay the *Vengeur* on board the *Bremen*. Then you go and see everything ready to get out."

"Goot! I thought you vould find dat de best scheme. Ve shall be outside in less as an hour." So saying he left the saloon, and then Taxil came in to receive Max's instructions.

So perfectly did he carry them out, and so thoroughly had Franz made all the arrangements, that within half an hour the air-ship was lying in her place on the *Bremen's* deck, properly shored up on dog-leg supports, and yet free to rise at any moment into the air. Her two Maxim's had been replaced at the forward ports and a light quick-firing pneumatic shell-gun which the *Pilgrim* had brought out was mounted aft, so that she was perfectly ready to co-operate with the *Destroyer* in case any fighting had to be done.

Twelve men had been left to work the *Destroyer*, and this with the recruits left nearly eighty free to work the big liner. The *Bremen* had coals enough in her bunkers to run some ten thousand miles at half speed. This, of course, was not enough to take her to Utopia, especially as she might have to do some hard steaming on the way, but this gave them very little anxiety. There was plenty of coal on the sea to be had for the taking. Nothing would be easier than to run down a liner or a cargo boat or even half a dozen of them on the route, empty them of coal, and turn them adrift, and this as a matter of fact was done no less than four times between the African coast and Cape Horn.

Before eight o'clock everything was ready. The *Pilgrim* went out first and ran away to the northward, then the *Destroyer* stole out to see that the coast was quite clear and came back to tow the *Bremen* through the narrow entrance. By nine o'clock they were well clear of the land and, with no lights showing, they steamed away in company to the south-west.

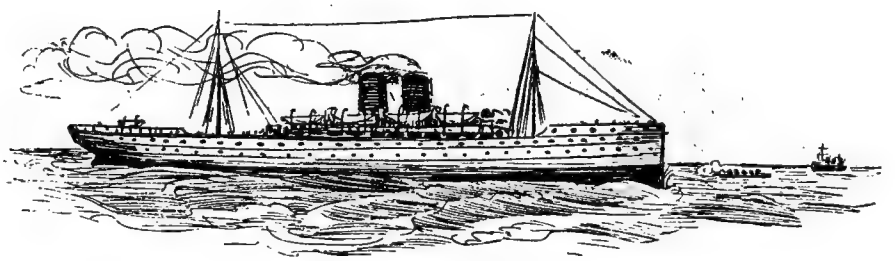
Beyond the holding up and plundering of two South American liners and a couple of big ocean tramps the voyage out was marked by no incident worthy of record, and on the morning of the fifth of February the look-outs reported Mount Plato rising out of the unfrequented sea dead ahead to the north-west. Max who had profited immensely by the healthy quiet of a long sea voyage and the skill of Doctor Fargeau, well seconded by his own vigorous constitution, was almost as well as ever and quite ready to take command of the *Vengeur* again.

The *Bremen* was therefore ordered to go dead slow for the land, and the air-ship rose from her deck to make a reconnaissance of the island, while the *Destroyer* ran ahead to patrol the outside of the reef. The *Britannia* had, of course, been taken to pieces and stowed away in the liner's 'tween decks, as it was not intended to make use of her for the present, except for experimental purposes.

The *Vengeur* had not floated for long over the familiar landscape of the island of Utopia before Max felt certain that his main fears had been realised. The most searching scrutiny of his glasses failed to reveal a single sign of life. The Settlement was there with its outlying houses, but no smoke rose from the chimneys of those in which the cooking for the colony was done. He soared over Mount Plato and Mount Orient and found the craters deserted.

Then, still cursing the delay that had made them come too late, and the promptness and skill with which the colonists must have formed and executed their plans after his departure, he ran the air-ship over the dockyard only to find the same silence and the same signs of desertion there. Worse than all, the shed in which the *Nautilus* had been built lay in ruins, the slips were empty, and, with a savage oath breaking from his lips, he was forced to the conclusion that his attempt to destroy her had failed, that the colonists had finished her and taken her away to some unknown destination, and that, therefore, the hitherto incomparable *Destroyer* was now no longer the mistress of the seas.

(To be continued.)



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THE RECORD OF A BASE ACT.

KITTY DELAMARE was uncomfortable. We were constrained. Remembering the proverb about glass houses, we were all disposed to be tolerably charitable to flirtations and flirtees, but this was a little too bad.

Dave Hilton was a general favourite, a fine, manly, deserving fellow; and the only weak thing that he ever had done was his falling in love with Kitty.

She was a handsome girl, with a fair, sweet face bearing no trace of craft or evil in it; but, heartless and utterly incapable of loving anyone but herself, or of appreciating the unselfish devotion that was offered her, she led Dave on through a whole summer, suffered all his attention, went out only with him, might even have married him, if George Maryatt had not presented himself at that time as a suitor.

As his expectations were greater, Kitty threw over Dave without scruple; even assumed a look of astonishment when he referred to the encouragement that she had given him; was very gentle, very sweet, very cold, and utterly inexorable.

I never saw a man so thoroughly beaten down as Dave looked the morning he left us. He had lost, not only her, but his faith for a time in women.

Our indignation was intense; for we were all personal friends of Dave, and Kitty's cold serenity and utter absence of even a tinge of remorse was infinitely provoking. She was so wise, however, so quiet, so patient, and had such childish ways, and, above all, was so marvellously pretty, that the men could not do less than be civil to her; and, as she cared nothing whatever about the girls, they found their indignation thrown away, and comforted themselves with the reflection that at least she had not entrapped George Maryatt, who had gone away without proposing.

Kitty, however, took her defeat philosophically, and, just at this juncture, down came Paul Danforth. His arrival was a surprise to all, and a mystery to me; for, early in the summer, he had sketched his plans for the season, and "The Pines" had by no means entered into his calculations. He was an intimate friend of Dave's; and it was to him Dave had gone on leaving us; and, duly weighing all these considerations, I could not but wonder what evil angel had sent him among us.

From the first Kitty was not a little struck by his appearance, though he was not a man to be highly esteemed. Not handsome, but with a face capable of an infinite variety of expressions, superbly formed, possessed of a tact almost womanlike, a deep, melodious voice, and brilliant eyes; not the man to whom I would willingly have given a sister or a daughter.

Curiously enough, it was their first meeting (I mean Kitty and Paul), and, as he was a warm admirer of female beauty, I looked for the immediate initiation of a flirtation. No such thing occurred, however. He was polite, attentive as any gentleman might be to a pretty young girl, but for all further effect Kitty might as well have been her grandmother, so small a share did she seem to occupy in his thoughts. I confess to being puzzled; the others rejoiced; and Kitty, who had looked calmly into Dave Hilton's blood-shot eyes and haggard face, and met our taunts and slights serenely, could not hide her chagrin. His indifference wounded the only love of which she was capable—her self-love—and roused her from her usual quiet security to active exertions.

She positively sought out Paul, intrigued to attract his notice and admiration, and in vain. The innocent unconsciousness of this man of the world stood in good stead, and all of Kitty's arrows fell harmless to the ground.

So passed the first three weeks. Of what follows I shall tell the tale as it was told me afterwards, not as I saw it at the time.

Kitty—let us hope, accidentally—had sprained her ankle, just seriously enough to prevent her walking out, and to give her an excuse for becoming morning-caps and the display of a handsome foot and slipper; and Paul could not but think, as he looked at her, that if white and rose tints, heavenly blue eyes, superb golden hair, rosy little fingers, a rounded chin, a little arched foot, and all the foolery of lace, and bows, and dainty handkerchiefs, could excuse folly, then was Dave Hilton fully justified in loving Kitty Delamere.

All this time she had been lying smelling at a rose that she was swirling in her fingers, seemingly unconscious of his steady look.

Suddenly he spoke.

"When have you heard from Dave Hilton, Miss Delamere?"

"I have not heard from him at all," she said timidly. "He is much too angry with me to write to me, and you," she added, half-raising her eyes, but dropping them instantly before Paul's burning, inscrutable looks, "you are angry, too."

"I? You mistake. I should not presume to be. What have we in common?"

"Nothing," she answered, wincing under his tone; "but I could wish that we could hold a good opinion of each other, as common property. Mr. Danforth, won't you come here a moment? I have something to say to you?"

Paul came over and sat near her, in the chair that she had indicated by a wave of hand.

"You know," she commenced, "that I have heard so much of you that I could not but feel as if I knew you before we came here even; and all that I have heard and seen has given me no reason to think otherwise than well. Ask yourself, then, if it is not hard that a person whom I respect should condemn me, misjudge me, without a hearing, as I know that you have done. Will you let me tell what that miserable story about Dave Hilton really was?"

"If you like," returned Paul coldly.

"I always liked Dave," went on Kitty plaintively. "I was really fond of him, as a brother. I told him so, and I thought that he understood. He raved, persisted, would not be refused. I pitied him; but what could I do? I must be firm. If I had shown him half the grief I felt he would never have left me. It would have simply prolonged his misery and mine. Could I have done otherwise?"

"You? Certainly not," returned Paul, with a somewhat remarkable accent on the pronoun.

"I confess," went on Kitty, "that I think now I might have been to blame in not checking him quickly enough, in not speaking more decidedly; but I never dreamed that his attentions were more than brotherly, and I was so fond of him."

Here she heaved a little sigh; and then came a silence, broken at last by little sobs and curious, suppressed sounds from Kitty's corner.

Paul put out his hand and touched a face wet with genuine tears.

"You are crying. What is the matter?" he asked, more gently than he had yet spoken.

"Nothing."

"Do ladies cry like that for nothing?"

"Well, then, I am so lonely. They are all against me; and you, whom I thought would be generous and believe me, are against me, too."

"How do you know I am against you?"

"Your silence just now spoke more plainly than words."

"Perhaps you are not the wisest of interpreters. I am not conscious of having given you cause for any such assertion. It is unjust in you to say so."

Kitty sank back with a little sigh.

"I am tired, Mr. Danforth. Will you give me a glass of water?"

He brought it and stood by her after she had finished drinking it.

"Are we friends?" he asked, with a soft look, rare on his face.

"Do you believe me?"

"Believe?"

"About Dave Hilton?"

"I think Dave should have been capable of taking care of himself. I am not sworn to do battle for him. I shall have enough to do to take care of myself."

"You persist in thinking so, then?"

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"Thinking what? You are obscure."

"That I was unfeminine—a flirt."

"That is your explanation, not mine. How can I but believe you? It is hardly necessary to say that I do. I think you evade me also. You have not answered me yet. Are we friends?"

Kitty put out a little hand silently, and Paul, taking it into his grasp, pressed and kissed it.

From that time they were I hardly know what; it seemed rather a vassalage than a flirtation. Paul's caprices equalled those of the most inveterate coquette. At one time he was devotion itself, and Kitty bloomed out at such times with a loveliness truly surprising, because the expression of an emotion, the least selfish of any feeling that she had ever experienced; at others he was cold, distant, almost uncivil, devoting himself exclusively to others, and these alterations, perplexing to us all, wore visibly on Kitty's health and spirits.

She was thoroughly subdued, this veteran coquette, this cold-hearted girl. Paul chose to prefer the ugliest and most unbecoming dress in her wardrobe, and she wore it till we hated the sight of it. He insisted that she looked best with her hair plainly dressed, and she put all the superb golden mass straight behind her ears, and lost half of her beauty in consequence.

At last he addressed her in words of love, carelessly, as one who was sure of his prize; and she caught at the declaration eagerly, complaining at the same time that he but half loved her.

This was not the burden of her complaints.

She doubted perpetually, required perpetual reassuring, assurances that Paul gave sometimes carelessly, sometimes refused pettishly. On one of these occasions, Paul said to her:

"You distrust me strangely. Do you dread retributive justice? Is it that you remember Hilton?"

She shuddered.

"Why do you speak of him? I never loved him?"

"But you do love me?"

"Yes."

"And if I should deceive you, as you did Hilton?"

"I cannot imagine it. I would not believe it; but if such a thing could be, I should not die—people don't die so easily—but live. Oh, why do you suggest such things? I had rather die than know you were false."

"But suppose I were; suppose I hated you for a cruel wrong done to my dearest friend; suppose I had sworn to wreck your life as you have wrecked his; suppose that——"

"Paul, are you mad, or am I? Why do you talk thus? Why do you look so?"

"I have taken off the mask. At last you see me as I am; at last you hear me say what has so long been in my heart, and know the truth, and Hilton is avenged."

Kitty rose, white as death and trembling in every limb, tried to speak, staggered, stretched forth her hand, and fainted.

Paul rang the bell, consigned her to the servant's care and left the house. She has never seen him since.

MOBBED BY MISTAKE.

A NIGHT ADVENTURE IN BENARES.

HAD I known what was going to befall me when I took steamer passage from Ceylon to India I should have probably continued my journey eastward round the world without stopping at the "Land of the Rajahs." In blissful ignorance, however, I landed at Calcutta.

The time of year was that when the climate most favours up-country travelling, and so, after a brief visit with friends, I started north by rail. I was the richer by half-a-dozen introductory letters to men of more or less prominence in the chief cities of the empire.

I went first to Benares—the sacred city on the mighty Ganges, and sought the house of Sita Ram, to whom one of my letters was addressed. Sita Ram was a wealthy and cultured Hindoo banker, and my friends had pictured in glowing colours the hospitality that I would receive.

Before my ride through the city was over I felt that hospitality of any sort from anyone would be doubly welcome. To my surprise most of the bazaars and business places were closed, though it was early afternoon. Groups of evil-faced natives stood about in the squares and streets, while police and soldiers appeared to be unusually plentiful. I was made a target for sullen glances from all sides, and I could not help recalling the stirring times of the great mutiny, more than thirty years back.

I found Sita Ram's house to be a palatial cream-coloured building, not far from the river. Its owner proved to be absent, but his private secretary received me and opened the letter of introduction.

Baboo Das was a sleek, mahogany-faced gentleman, who spoke English perfectly, and wore European garments of faultless cut.

"My honoured master is in Allahabad on a matter of business," he explained. "He will return in a day or two, and meanwhile the house and servants are at your disposal."

I thanked Baboo Das, and inquired the meaning of the strange sights I had witnessed in the city.

"There has been danger of a riot during the past twenty-four hours," he replied gravely; "but it is believed to be past now. The most ignorant of the Hindoo population are angry because the municipality have acquired the Ramjee temple for the purpose of erecting new waterworks on its site. The Mohammedans have taken part in the disturbances because of the dearness of provisions for which the municipality is also responsible. My honoured master belongs to the board of government and helped to purchase the temple."

I suspected that Sita Ram's departure might be more in the order of flight than a business trip.

"Are you sure that the danger is over?" I asked, for I had some notion of going to a hotel.

"Yes," replied Baboo Das, "the rioters are cowed and submissive. My master's house was under the protection of the police, but they withdrew this morning."

His manner was so calm and decided that I quite forgot my fears. I was shown a luxurious bed-chamber, and a little later I dined in solitude off dishes of gold and silver. The entire house was furnished in a costly and sumptuous style that showed its bachelor owner to possess a sense of European taste as well as of barbaric splendour.

During the evening I was left pretty much to myself, and as I did not care to venture into the streets I passed the time with a cigar and a magazine, and when I signified my wish to retire he preceded me upstairs.

Squatted on a rug in the hall, just outside my room, was a bright-faced Hindoo lad, about twelve years old. A cord dangled by his side, and, passing through the door, communicated with the fans that were attached to the ceiling of the apartment. The lad was evidently the "punky wallah," or fan puller. His name was Gunpat, Baboo Das informed me, and his duty was to keep me cool through the sultry hours of the night.

I chatted with the boy for a few moments, and found him to be intelligent and fairly conversant with English. Then I

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entered my room and lowered the square of rice matting that was furled above the doorway. There was also a door of heavy teak-wood, but I did not think it necessary to close it. The apartment had two windows, overlooking a small court-yard that contained shrubs and a fountain. After riding most of the day in a stuffy and jolting railway carriage I was weary. It did not take me long to undress and fall asleep. The last thing I remember was the soft whirring of the fans and their refreshing current of air.

I was awakened by a hard tugging at the bed-clothes. "Rouse, Sahib, there is danger," was poured into my ears by a shrill, childish voice.

I sprang out of bed in a trice and struck a light. It revealed the half-naked figure of little Gunpat. His expression was one of indignation rather than of terror.

"What is it?" I demanded.

"Those pigs of rioters, Sahib," he replied. "They have broken loose at last."

Then, for the first time I became aware of the tumult in the streets surrounding the house. Brawling voices and the restless patter of feet rose hoarsely on the night air. I could distinguish the shrill "Din! Din!" of the Mohammedans—their rallying cry to battle. From afar I heard the faint pealing of bells and the rattle of musketry. A lively commotion was going on downstairs, banging of doors, and shoving of furniture, interlarded with husky voices.

Gunpat slipped away for a moment and I hurried on my shirt and trousers. I felt decidedly uncomfortable, to say the least. I could not forget the black looks that had greeted me on the previous afternoon. Europeans were in bad odour at Benares just now. I glanced at the clock. The hands pointed to an hour past midnight. I began to consider what I had better do. I was puzzled to account for the non-appearance of Baboo Das.

Meanwhile the tumult had swelled to a frightful din. The street without seemed to be choked with rioters. "Kill Sita Ram," they yelled. "Slay the heretic. Loot his house. Down with the destroyers of the faith!"

I was fully alive to the situation now, and the thought of my peril sickened me. A moment later a succession of heavy thuds, followed by a tremendous crash and a burst of cheers, told that the main entrance of the house had been beaten in. Cries of rage and terror and the sounds of deadly conflict floated up the staircase.

I determined to escape, if such a thing were possible. There was no time to put on shoes or coat. I seized my money and papers and jammed them into the pockets of my trousers.

I ran to the window and looked out. Alas! The courtyard swarmed with dusky figures. The only avenue of escape was cut off.

I turned back into the room, resolved to sell my life dearly. I had no weapons, but on the wall hung a Tibetan shield and spear, trimmed with yaks' tails. I dragged them down and rushed for the door. Before I could close it entirely, a figure slipped through the crack, and I very nearly impaled Gunpat on my spear.

"The Sahib must fight," he exclaimed. "Baboo Das has fled, and the rioters are downstairs and everywhere. They have killed some of the servants, and now they will search for my master, whom they hate. They believe he is in the house. They will kill you, too, Sahib, if they find you."

"What shall we do?" I demanded. "Is there a way to escape?"

"None, Sahib. We must push furniture against the door and fight. The police and the soldiers will be here presently."

"But surely the mob won't hurt a little chap like you," I replied, filled with admiration at the lad's bravery. "Go while you can, Gunpat."

"No," he answered calmly, "my duty is with the Sahib. I will stay here."

There was no time to argue, for already the bloodthirsty miscreants were pattering up the staircase with shouts and yells. The door had only a frail bolt on the inside, but luckily the furniture of the room was massive. Gunpat seemed to know just what was wanted. He helped me to the best of his strength, and hardly was the barricade in place when the mob surged through the hall.

"The heretic is trapped," they cried, at sight of the closed door. "Come out, Sita Ram, and meet your fate."

Crash! crash! crash! The door trembled under the rain of heavy blows. A table that was on the summit of the barricade toppled to the floor and burst asunder. The mob heard the fall and yelled exultantly.

Gunpat twirled his spear between his supple fingers. "The end will be soon, Sahib," he said quite calmly. The next instant he gave an eager cry and pointed overhead. There I saw for the first time a small circular trap-door.

"Where does it lead?" I demanded.

"To the roof," replied Gunpat. "My master sits there on hot evenings. But there is no ladder. We must take from the barricade, Sahib."

No sooner said than done. Hardly as they could be spared we removed a table, a chest of drawers, and two chairs. We piled them one upon another. I plainly saw the door quiver from top to bottom as I mounted the shaky structure. I was directly below the trap now, and a blow from my fist drove it upward. I grasped the edge of the opening and drew myself to the roof. Gunpat passed up the two spears and the shield. Then I caught the lad's hands and drew him to my side.

That instant the mob broke into the room below, where they expected to find Sita Ram. They howled with rage at the empty room. Then we saw their dark faces glaring at the pile in the middle of the room, and up at the opening in the ceiling above. We slammed down the trap door, but there was no way to fasten it on the outside.

We knew the mob would follow us in a moment, so we ran across the flat roof, mounted the parapet, and sprang to the top of an adjoining house. Thus we hurried on from roof to roof till we were some distance from the house of Sita Ram.

"Faster, Sahib! they are coming," panted Gunpat.

Then husky yells rang out behind us and I turned and saw half a score of turbaned figures at our very heels. The space of but a single roof intervened. A spear whizzed between us. A pistol ball shrieked overhead.

Faster and faster we sped, till suddenly a gap of six feet wide yawned before us. "Jump, Sahib," yelled Gunpat. Without hesitation we sprang together, and landed safely on the next roof. One of our pursuers was close behind us—a burly Mohammedan with a sword. Gunpat snatched the brazen shield from my hand; turned, and threw it with all his might. It struck the fellow as he was in the act of jumping. Without a cry he plunged down between the houses. His companions paused only an instant. Then they leaped the gap, and came on with frightful yells.

This advantage, brief as it was, proved our salvation. We ran on as before, climbing headlong over the parapets from roof to roof, neither gaining nor losing. The end house of the block abutted on the Ganges, and all at once, over the last parapet, we saw the deep blue water below us.

"You can swim, Sahib?" asked Gunpat.

"Yes; come on," I replied.

We dropped through twenty feet of air and shot far under water. When we came to the surface we dived again instantly. The next time we rose we were well out in the current. Side by side we swam out, while a shower of spears fell harmlessly in our wake.

Anchored in mid-stream we spied the ark-shaped roof of a trader's boat, and a short swim brought us to it. The friendly natives gave us shelter, and there we remained until morning, listening to the sounds of strife in the opposite-lying city.

When day broke the riot was quelled, but the mob had wrecked the telegraph office and railway station, plundered the treasury, and destroyed the boiler and engine of the new water-works.

Sita Ram returned that afternoon, and I found him a most polished and agreeable gentleman. He was apparently unconcerned over the looting of his house. His first act was to discharge Baboo Das. His next, on hearing my story, was to promote brave little Gunpat to an honoured position among the household servants. Nor did I forget to honour the lad in my own way.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

THE MAN OF TWO LIVES.

BEFORE his death—the result of solitude and old age—Jean Ferney kept a dingy little shop in a certain street near the Rue Charlot, Paris. It was not a respectable neighbourhood—indeed, the police considered it a very questionable one, though no crime was ever committed there. Perhaps its ill-repute was due to the reticence of its inhabitants, and their inclination to attend too strictly to their own affairs, to know or profess to know nothing about their neighbours, and to have forgotten in a large measure even their own previous history.

The street was narrow and dark; so narrow that the sunshine only visited the pavement while the sun was high up in the heavens, and never succeeded in entering Ferney's shop further than the door-sill. To the right of the door was a show-window, in which a few old coins and time-stained manuscripts were displayed, but so covered with dust that it was better to go within if you should wish to examine them. Above the door hung a sign:

"J. MALPLAQUET, EXPERT CHIROGRAPHIST."

Not *Jean Ferney*, oh, no; he had some years before been seized with an inexplicable antipathy for that name, and changed it at the same time as his business, place of residence, and wearing apparel; at the same time that he shaved of his moustache, let his beard grow, and bleached his hair somewhat. But perhaps we should not speak of this transformation, as he never referred to it himself.

One day as Ferney, or Malplaquet to be more polite, was sitting at his desk deciphering a bit of writing under the light of his smoky lamp, the door opened and a man entered. He, too, seemed a rather mysterious individual, and at the moment you might have found a set of false whiskers in his pocket, together with a pistol and a pair of handcuffs—but that is neither here nor there—for at present he was clean shaved, plain La Rouche, clad in his ordinary suit of ministerial black, with his broad felt hat, as usual, well down over his piercing grey eyes.

"Good morning, La Rouche," said Ferney, glancing up from his work.

"Good morning, Malplaquet," was the answer, as La Rouche seated himself on a chest at the side of the desk.

"How is Constantin, and the detective force in general?"

"Constantin has been missing for the last three days: one of his slow but sure schemes, I suppose. He is interested in the same case as myself now. Will you inform me what sort of person wrote this scrap, Malplaquet?"

Malplaquet took the paper handed to him.

"Where was this unearthed, La Rouche?"

"It was found in the secret drawer of the writing-desk of the late diplomatist, Jules Foreau. The drawer was discovered by a member of the family only five days ago."

"The writing," said Malplaquet, without waiting to comprehend the answer to his question in his eagerness to commence deciphering, "I see it bears no date, but from its state of preservation, the yellow stains here in the right hand corner, and the degree to which the ink has faded, it was written, I should judge, about nine years ago."

"Precisely; that was the date of the decease of the recipient," said La Rouche, taking his note-book from his pocket.

"The characters," the adept continued, "are small, indicating literary tastes. The peculiar formation of the d's is undoubtedly due to much practice in the writing of Greek. The handwriting smacks of the university, a German university it may be, since there appears to be a slight touch of German angularity in the small letters. The writer was certainly a scholarly man, though perhaps a quack in some respects. He was reticent, this is shown by the shortness of the *g* and the *y*; in short, you have a man to deal with, La Rouche, a man.

"Another thing which may aid you. This was written by an imperfect hand, a hand mutilated in some way; a finger amputated probably.

"Now that we have determined all that the chirography can explain, may I have the pleasure of reading the document?" asked Malplaquet politely. The detective nodded.

"To M. Jules Foreau,—

"When this is placed on your study table your very dear friend and colleague, Paul Rapin, will have been dead one hour. His body will be found lying face downward in the street near the south end of Pont d'Austerlitz. No sign of violence will be found; he has to all appearance died of disease of the heart. The affair is purely political, I assure you. This letter is to warn you not to attend the Assembly to-morrow or the day following. Of course, you will not dare in the present state of the times to disclose this which I have written, and to which, therefore, that you may know instead of suspect me, I without hesitation affix my name,

"FERNEY."

The reading ended.

"Foreau went to the Assembly the day following," said La Rouche——

"And died of heart disease the same evening," added Malplaquet smiling.

"Ferney, Ferney," muttered Malplaquet, "I have heard the name before. Look in the municipal death records of April, 1852. I think you will there find note of his decease, my friend."

La Rouche, closing his note-book, rose to go, and held out his hand. Dr. Malplaquet grasped it with his left, for his right hand was mutilated, lacking the first joint of the fore-finger, and detectives are sometimes keen observers.

The next day the detective was perusing the municipal death records, when he stopped at an entry which ran:

"Ferney, Jean, was observed drowning in the Seine, April 9th. Help reached the spot too late. For witnesses refer to Testimony of Witnesses, vol. 196—3—90.

"Body unrecovered."

The last two words had evidently been interpolated in the record at a later date.

The record was made in the disguised handwriting of Ferney—but La Rouche was not a chirographist.

RESULT OF PLOT COMPETITION.

THIS competition has been in every way a success. Several hundreds of attempts were received. Most of them were very good; and I think my surmise about brilliant ideas lying dormant in the minds of readers was well founded, although I noticed that one or two found it incumbent upon them to stimulate their imagination by reference to early numbers of SHORT STORIES.

The Two Guineas has been awarded to Mr. H. Flowerdew, 2, Roskell Terrace, Lower Richmond Road, Putney, S.W., whose plot, written up into a story, will appear in an early issue.

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A POSITIVE REMEDY FOR CORPULENCE

Any remedy that can be suggested as a cure or alleviation for stoutness will be heartily welcomed. We have recently received a well-written book, the author of which seems to know what he is talking about. It is entitled "Corpulency and the Cure," 256 pages, and is a cheap issue (only 4d.) published by Mr. F. C. Russell, of Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C. Our space will not do justice to this book; send for it yourself. It appears that Mr. Russell has submitted all kinds of proofs to the English Press. The editor of the *Tablet*, the Catholic organ, writes:—"Mr. Russell does not give us the slightest loophole for a doubt as to the value of his cure, for, in the most straightforward and matter-of-fact manner, he submitted some hundreds of original and unsolicited testimonial letters for our perusal, and offered us plenty more, if required. To assist him to make this remedy known, we think we cannot do better than publish quotations from some of the letters submitted. The first one, a marchioness, writes from Madrid:—'My son, Count ——, has reduced his weight in twenty-two days 16 kilos.—*i.e.*, 34 lbs.' Another writes:—'So far (six weeks from commencement of following your system) I have lost fully two stone in weight.' The next (a lady) writes:—'I am just half the size.' A fourth:—'I find it is successful in my case. I have lost 8 lbs. in weight since I commenced (two weeks).' Another writes:—'A reduction of 18 lbs. in a month is a great success.' A lady from Bournemouth writes:—"I feel much better, have less difficulty in breathing, and can walk about.' Again a lady says:—"It reduced me considerably, not only in the body, but all over.' The author is very positive. He says:—'Step on a weighing machine on Monday morning and again on Tuesday, and I guarantee you have lost 2 lbs. in weight without the slightest harm, and vast improvement in health through ridding the system of unhealthy accumulations.'"—*Cork Herald.*

Should Stout Persons STARVE THEMSELVES?

We are afraid that semi-starvation as a cure for corpulency prevails very much to a dangerous degree. Mr. Archer, the late well-known prominent jockey, was in the habit of going without food for a long stretch in order that he could ride a certain horse at its weight, and there is not much doubt that the debility resulting from this habit of abstemiousness was certainly not conducive to combating the dire attack of fever, which was, perhaps, indirectly responsible for the untimely end, in the zenith of his fame, of this unfortunate but accomplished horseman. Even Mary Jane in the kitchen will eat sparingly of the food allowed her, while she will seek to reduce her fat by copious draughts from the vinegar cruet, and succeed only in injuring the coats of her stomach—the forerunner of dyspeptic troubles which will be difficult to overcome.

The Continental medicos seem to advocate this great reduction of ordinary foods, but one of these savants suggests that the stout person should eat considerably of fatty meats, in order that the appetite is appeased, and consequently less food required, so that practically this is indirectly advocating semi-starvation. On the other hand, Mr. Russell, the British specialist, takes a different course. He says, "Eat as much as you like," and as it is an acknowledged fact that under his treatment persons lose from 2 lb. to 12 lb. per week, it beyond doubt stands out pre-eminent against those so-called starvation cures "made in Germany." Some claim that Mr Russell has to insist upon his patients drinking hot water every morning, but on the contrary he avers that it is dangerous to do so, and has, of course, never advised it. No; the success of Mr. Russell's treatment is incomparably beyond other specialists, for he resorts to no stringent dietary, and simply prescribes a harmless vegetable tonic combination which is the outcome of years of study and botanical research. We advise all those interested in this question to get his book, the price of which is only 4d. It is entitled, "Corpulency and the Cure," 256 pp., and is published by him at Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C. It can be had direct, or through any bookseller.—Extract from *The Million.*

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